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by JOHN MAY

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EDITORIAL

Emigration strengthens our great British family

EVERY WEEK 250 PEOPLE leave this country to start life afresh in the Dominions. Since the end of the war nearly half a million—470,000—have emigrated.

Are they all running away from a country which they feel is wretched and futureless?

Hardly! There are only half as many emigrants as there were after the first World War, and not nearly enough to satisfy the wishes of Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

Disgruntled people, usually wealthy and often titled, who announce in Press interviews that they "see no future" in this country and are therefore shaking its dust off their feet, are not in any way typical. What they really mean is that in our modern society they find it difficult to get the unearned privileges they used to enjoy. Few of them ever did a constructive day's work in their lives, and the country is well rid of them.

The bulk of genuine emigrants are workers—the best type of skilled artisans and their families. Because such people are today the most prosperous in Britain the flow of emigration is relatively small. Good wages, conditions and prospects here outweigh the restlessness which usually attacks men after a great war.

Even so, can Britain afford to lose any of her best workers, since the manpower shortage still presses heavily on industry after industry?

There is no simple answer to this question. One thing is certain. If emigration stopped or was forbidden, there would be something very wrong with this country. Britain is today more than ever, after two world wars, the Mother Country of the Commonwealth.

BRITAIN is the acknowledged leader of all the sister-states, not only in money matters, industry, trade and defence, but in human values. This little island is a sort of fountain of vitality, ideas and energy for all the Commonwealth and Empire. Even to the non-British Dominions such as India there is a bigger flow of business folk and technicians than before the last war.

As long as this human fountain continues to flow, sending out adventurous, industrious people to the ends of the earth, the British world will hold together. If it dried up, the Dominions would gradually drift away—and Britain herself would wither and die.

The Dominions are hungry for people! They are yearning to fill their "great open spaces." Their natural riches await exploitation for lack of enough hands and brains. Their industries could go ahead if they had more craftsmen.

Canada could economically double her population over the next twenty years. Australia is still largely an empty continent. Australia lived for many years under the pressure of the Japanese desire to expand into her northern territories. But the phrase "A White Australia" was more than a slogan. Faced as she has been by the very real dangers of aggression and infiltration from the Far East, this Dominion means to exclude all large-scale immigration except from Western sources.

To support that policy effectively she needs more population, and the Mother Country must help. The only question is, how can we best help?

DOMINION governments nowadays demand skill or capital or both from their immigrants, who have to be "integrated"—as the modern jargon goes—into a civilized community instead of fending for themselves in a primitive frontier life.

Assisted and organized emigration is the rule. When emigrants return to Britain angry and disappointed after a few months overseas it is usually because they did not use the officially provided means of ensuring suitable work and homes.

The best possible advice to anyone contemplating emigration is: "Approach the authorities in London. Each Dominion has its House there, with an expert staff to help emigrants over every detail of their project. Let them help you—even if it means waiting awhile in a queue."

And would-be emigrants should remember the drawbacks of each Dominion. South Africa has special political and racial problems. New Zealand and Australia are farthest away. The amount of capital that can be taken to Canada is limited because of the dollar scarcity.

But then there are the different advantages to be considered—climate, types of employment, social life, and so forth. Each Government's experts have all this information.

Subject to such a sensible approach, there are good reasons to hope that still more people will emigrate, because in going to the Dominions they are not leaving the British family, but helping to strengthen it for the future.

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FREE SPEECH

Her father went away

DIVORCED FROM MY husband, I am willing to work hard and sacrifice pleasures for my daughter's education. But mothers here in Norwich tell me that the first question a child gets asked on entering school is: "What is your father's occupation?" Also, it seems a regular thing to get the children to write essays on what their parents do in the evenings.

I want my daughter to get on in the world on her own merits, but it appears that children get through school and scholarships better if their fathers are in good positions. Have I got to remarry for my daughter to get the best chance in life?—MRS. E. M., Norwich.

Those Dancing Specs.

YOUNG MEN, ACCORDING to Miss D. M., Lancs ("Free Speech," June 17), hesitate to ask girls wearing spectacles to dance with them. When I go dancing every Saturday evening, I certainly dance with girls wearing spectacles, and others do the same. What my friends and I don't like is to see girls making fools of themselves—we dislike nothing more than seeing two girls jitterbugging round the floor together. One of my regular partners is a lady of about forty. She wears spectacles, but she can dance: sometimes we are the first couple on the floor.—N. CARTER, 11 Marlborough Park, Ilfracombe, Devonshire.

. . . Why should girls sit around waiting for some male to look them over before asking for a dance? A girl is expected to dance with any man who asks her—whether he's old, in his infancy, fat, skinny, bald, flat-footed or short-sighted. It would be a nice change to let the men sit around like consumer goods at a slave market and allow the girls to do the asking.—HILDA BRANDRETH, 11 Laundry Road, Smethwick, Birmingham.

Ugly Pylons On The March

THE INSPIRING ARTICLE by Harry Hopkins on the hydro-electric scheme in the Highlands (JOHN BULL, June 3), included the sentence "the pylons march across the heather." To me it brought forth visions of beautiful country spoilt by these hideous metal structures. Surely there is some other way to carry electricity just as effectively and at about the same cost?—J. H. WHITNALL, 79 Battersby Road, Catford, London, S.E.6.

There is another way—by underground cable—but this method would raise costs at least ten times and defeat the purpose of the scheme, says the British Electricity Authority. Further objection is that underground cables could only carry less than 132,000 volts. Capacity of overhead cables may shortly be raised to 275,000 volts.

Gardener's Queer Corner

KEEN ON GARDENING, I always try to grow at least one unusual plant every year. Here are some, all of which will grow in the open: (1) the old-fashioned Double Blue Primrose; (2) Caper Plant, the seeds of which are useful for sauces; (3) Angelica Ornamental Foliage—the stems are tasty stewed with fruit and make useful cake decorations; (4) Woad, used by ancient Britons to dye their bodies blue, very decorative in the border; (5) American Land Cress, like watercress but can be grown in good soil in any shady spot; (6) Calvary Clover, whose leaves have red marks like drops of blood and seeds like a miniature crown of thorns; and (7) "The Obedient Flower," whose blooms, due to a peculiar arrangement of hairs, can be moved around the stem and will stay put for a few minutes before returning to position. This year I am making a small-scale experiment with groundnuts.—MRS. V. COWAN, 2 Maybank Cottages, West Clandon, nr. Guildford, Surrey.

Sixth Form Queues For Milk

SEVEN YEARS AGO, WHEN I entered Caerphilly Grammar School, it was considered childish and undignified for a boy in the upper school to drink milk. But a great change has come about: now it is difficult to stop a sixth-former from taking more than his

share. Does this prove that modern youth is degenerating into a crowd of milk-sops, or that common sense has at last prevailed over a superiority complex?—H. C. MAYBREY, 64 Bartlett Street, Caerphilly, Glamorgan, South Wales.

Better And Better Serials

THE FIRST SERIAL I read in JOHN BULL—H. E. Bates's "The Jacaranda Tree"—was, I thought, one of the finest contemporary novels. When it was finished and the announcement of another was made, I felt sure the new serial could not be as good as its predecessor. Yet each new serial seems an improvement on the previous one. Now, with "A Town Like Alice," you have given readers what is undoubtedly Nevil Shute's best work.—CYRIL A. MACKAY, 1 Manford Way, Grange Hill, Chigwell, Essex.

Mother Spares The Rod

JOHN MAY'S ARTICLE, "Father's Way With the Naughty Boy" (JOHN BULL, June 17), appealed to me very much as I have been both father and mother to my own five boys and a girl. My first husband used to say: "My work finishes when I leave the office—the family is your job."

Only exceptionally did I use the strap, and that was when I found they had been lying to me.—MOTHER, Lincolnshire.

. . . I regret your waste of space on the half-baked notions and woolly theories of John May.—ARTHUR E. CARPENTER, 25 Church Gardens, Dorking, Surrey.

. . . Thank you for the most sensible and constructive article I have yet read on the subject.—DESMOND ALLAN HOLDEN, 18 Heatherdale Road, Mossley Hill, Liverpool.

Her Guinea-pig Holiday

AFTER THREE VISITS to Harvard Hospital, Salisbury, I can assure anyone who offers to act as a guinea-pig for the Common Cold Research Unit that the holiday is well worth it. We lived in large bungalows with every comfort provided. Board and lodging is free, there is 3s. a day pocket money, and the countryside is always full of interest. I had three enjoyable holidays—and didn't catch one cold!—MRS K. CHAFFEY, 102 Granby Road, Eltham, London, S.E.9.

The Wooden Horse Exposed

MANY READERS MUST be enjoying Oliver Philpot's "Stolen Journey" and, like myself, want to know what happened at the camp after he escaped and what became of the Wooden Horse.—R. D. MONK, 43 Emmanuel Road, Hastings, Sussex.

Leslie Sidwell ("Sid" in Philpot's story) says: "About three hours after the breakout, a patrol stumbled on the hole by accident. The Germans at once ordered a roll-call, but the p.o.w.s created such a confusion that it was called off at midnight. Next day we were all rounded up on the parade ground—nicely persuaded by tommy-guns—and each man was checked up against his history card bearing his photograph, finger-prints and description. It wasn't until dusk that the Germans discovered exactly who had escaped. Thereafter the incident became known as 'Tommy-gun Saturday.' Once the tunnel exit was found the real purpose of the vaulting horse was obvious. It was taken away and placed in the Germans' 'escape museum.'"

Two-faced Customers

WORKING IN A BANK, I find members of the public extremely courteous and pleasant to the staff. It is rather sickening to note that these same people are often downright rude and irritable to shop assistants, bus conductors and others whom they evidently consider belong to a lower stratum of the human species. — BRIAN MILTON, 139 Muirhead Avenue, Liverpool.

John Bull welcomes readers' views, experiences and ideas for publication. A guinea is paid for every letter used. Mark the envelope "Free Speech" and make sure your full name and address is in the letter.

THIS WEEK'S COVER

"THIS PICTURE," says cover artist Gilbert Wilkinson, "is not just one scene I witnessed but is a composition of many I came across on holidays around the slopes of the Sussex Downs. One of the greatest attractions of the country for me is the animals which give action to the whole landscape. I used to spend hours watching life on a farm, and little incidents like the baby feeding the foal would become stored in my memory."

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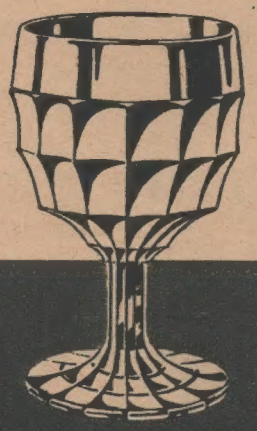

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THE DEEP END OF THE POOL

by LAURENCE KIRK

ILLUSTRATED BY K. J. PETTS

She saw a hand, then a face. He was climbing over. He was coming for her. Miss Straight could stand it no longer. She fired

Africa had much to teach Miss Straight—if only she could learn

THE FARM ON THE FRINGE of the Aberdares was so remote that the mail only reached it twice a week. There was no postman; and if neither the truck nor the car was going into the township, then Kakumbi used to fetch it on his aged bicycle.

He had fetched it that afternoon and the colonel had read the letter while he was having his tea. He smiled a little grimly and kept the contents to himself for the time being.

The colonel was in his seventieth year and incidentally had no right to that title. He had retired as a captain in 1908 and settled in the East African highlands. Ever since then he had lived there in a sunlit world of his own, struggling with all the difficulties; and it was the primitive tribesmen around who had decided when he was to be promoted. They made him a major when he began to lose his youthful figure and a colonel when his hair began to grow grey. If there had been any brigadiers around they would have made him that, too; for they liked their Bwana to be the biggest.

He had always got on very well with these tribesmen who looked so fierce with their rust-dyed hair and were really so very amiable. It was odd how the tribes that kept cattle were nearly always docile. Cows seemed to have a softening effect on human nature. It was the others in the native reserve nearby who only kept goats that caused the trouble. The colonel had to admit to a prejudice against some of the new and partly educated generation. Still, the rate of exchange was about ten goats to a cow; and now that the bride-price had gone up to thirty goats it was very tempting for the young men to come raiding his land for his herds. It was a perfectly understandable form of sport.

The colonel had lit his pipe now and was walking slowly out across the lawn. The letter would have to be answered that very night. But he was not thinking of the answer as yet.

When he looked at the paddocks and stock-yards, at the fields of pyrethrum and maize, the colonel could not understand how he had done so much in so short a life. It had been virgin land when he came. Every inch of every acre had to be cleared. Water had to be found. Tools had to be improvised. Little by little it had grown until he had a thousand acres under cultivation and another thousand grazing. Barns and storehouses had been built; burned some-times; and built again. And always the fuzzy, half-naked tribesmen looked to him.

Not a bad achievement, the colonel was

Continued on page 36

The policeman with the law's longest arm uses radio to pace his beat. It stretches from Finland to India and covers 50,000 racketeers

"Man Wanted" messages are teleprinted to the world's police in minutes from Interpol's Paris H.Q.

Chasing a crook across the world

by GUY ANGUS

NOT SO LONG AGO, a telegram received by Scotland Yard said cryptically: *We have Ebel,* and the Assistant Commissioner who received it grimaced. It meant that an "international headache," wanted by the police in Britain, France and Switzerland, had been picked up.

The man who sent the telegram was M. Jean Nepote, deputy secretary-general of Interpol—the International Criminal Police Commission. A dark, slim, dapper French detective, with intense, searching eyes, he sat in his office at the Interpol headquarters in Paris. In a seat opposite was Fred Ebel, the "headache"—tall, middle-aged, distinguished-looking, quick-witted—and alleged to be the leader of the greatest gold smuggling ring in the world. Commissioner Benhamou and two other detectives were standing by. The object of the interrogation was to discover how the organization worked.

Interpol had been interested in Ebel's activities for some time. Twice the French police had seized ingots at airports; one lot was stamped with English markings, and interrogation had revealed that "Ebel's gang" had smuggled them. Two years ago some British merchant seamen were detained in Dieppe because the car they had parked outside a café was found to contain a large number of Swiss watches. Their ship was impounded by the customs and the skipper made a statement alleging that he was carrying the watches under Ebel's instructions.

Trunks With False Bottoms

The Ebel inquiry had continued. Reports were received regarding his alleged traffics in gold from the police in six other European countries. Paris airport police found that privately chartered aircraft would log "Leaving for Genoa," arrive a few hours later in Luxemburg, and take off again, and touch down at Lausanne without the heavy luggage which the passenger had started out with from Paris. False-bottomed trunks were alleged to have been left in Luxemburg. So, when Ebel arrived in Paris one day last March, Nepote particularly wanted to see him.

Ebel is only one of Jean Nepote's "international headaches"; he has 50,000 others operating in one racket or another in the thirty-six members states of the International Criminal Police Commission. The beat extends from Helsinki to San Francisco; from Britain to India and Australia. It is the longest policeman's beat in the world.

Interpol grew out of necessity created by economic conditions after the first World War, when the mass movements of populations enabled criminals to pass unnoticed from one country to another, and a number of police forces agreed to co-operate in their common business of tracking down and bringing these criminals to justice. The commission was refounded in Paris in 1946.

A few Asiatic countries and some of the Soviet-controlled countries, including Russia itself, have not yet joined Interpol, though the Commission will give them the tip-off if a crook disappears in their direction. "It would help our work greatly if all countries could be brought into Interpol, particularly the South American countries," Nepote says. The South American continent has always been an ideal immigration goal for European racketeers. But they received a severe setback the day Venezuela became an Interpol member.

"We do not touch political, racial or purely economic matters," Nepote continues. "We do not pursue people who are running away from the tax-collector. Our interest is in the big-time international crook who operates on the grand scale and puts himself out of the reach of the law of one country by stepping over the border into another." Fortunately for Nepote's peace of mind, the big-timers usually come to Paris sooner or later, lured by the unrestricted luxury, the opportunities to spend money and the beautiful women of the gay capital. "When a criminal goes to London, he does his business without lingering," Nepote adds.

Secret Phones Link Bureaux

Every Interpol member country has a central national bureau linked by secret telephone to the International Central Bureau in Paris and national bureaux all over the world, and information is circulated and shared by all concerned. For this service each member country pays a subscription in Swiss francs, varying from five francs per 10,000 inhabitants for small countries to five francs per 25,000 for countries with a population of over fifty million. Britain pays less than £1,000 a year.

The results of co-operation have been fruitful. Take the case of Bela Herschsteller, alias Bela Herschburger, alias Robert Kahn, an Austrian, born in Vienna in 1902. In March, 1949, Scotland Yard signalled Interpol in Paris the discovery by the British customs, following an anonymous phone tip-off, of a false-bottomed trunk containing £8,000 in forged notes. The trunk had been sent from Paris by Bela Herschburger and was unaccompanied.

Interpol informed the French passport authorities, who said that a man describing himself as Herschburger had been issued with a French passport on production of a forged birth certificate, stating he had been born in France. The passport authorities also supplied Interpol with a photograph.

Nepote circulated this information to national

bureaux all over the world. Monaco replied that "Herschburger" was wanted on a confidence charge there; Germany said he had been sentenced five times by German courts for theft, giving false identities and forgery; Zurich supplied his real name and the fact that he had been convicted four times in Switzerland on confidence charges; Budapest reported that he had been convicted there, too; Brussels cabled that he was wanted there for fraud; Rome said they wanted to talk to him on a forged dollars inquiry; and the French police disclosed that, in 1943, an Aix-en-Provence court had sentenced him under a fourth name to three years' imprisonment for false pretences.

Nepote posted his agents. A police informer whispered to a French detective in a Montmartre bistro. Bela was arrested that day in an underground railway carriage, and the "grilling" began.

Herschsteller said he had been sent to Britain by Mathieu Costa, a Corsican counterfeit gang leader, who was "rubbed out" later by another gang in Marseilles, and admitted he had made contact in London with a man he knew as "Roger." He claimed that he had dropped out of the "combine" after he had arranged that "Roger" should collect the trunk. Scotland Yard are looking for "Roger"; but Herschsteller has been extradited to Switzerland to face charges there.

International Lone Wolves

"In four years Interpol has closed a thousand or more cases," Nepote says. "Our experts have studied drugs, criminal statistics, juvenile delinquency and the latest methods of crime detection. I think I can say our technique is the sum total of international experience."

Racial persecution in German-occupied countries is responsible for a lot of postwar crime; the average international racketeer is an exile, and Israel, Nepote declares, is where most of them have concentrated, having arrived with forged papers in the "hell ships." International gangs are small units, as the transcontinental racketeers prefer to work alone, relying on their personal astuteness. They are very different, Nepote says, from the naïve, hard-boiled Pigalle gunmen, who risk twenty years' hard labour or the guillotine for small gains.

George Kay was a confidence man and he worked alone. On January 27, 1949, Scotland Yard signalled Nepote: *"Seek George Kay who has obtained 11,500 sterling by confidence trick. . . ."* Kay's description followed, and the facts were circulated by Nepote to all European centres. Two days later Copenhagen replied: *"This individual crossed Denmark recently and left for Sweden."* And from Stockholm came: *"Kay left for Australia . . ."* with details of the ship, its ports of call and the date and time of arrival in Sydney. Some weeks later Sydney cabled Paris: *"Holding George Kay."* He was extradited to London and in due course charged and sentenced.

Drug Smuggler With A Scar

It is a dull spring afternoon and the long modern buildings of the Cité des Ternes, Interpol's Paris headquarters, could be those of any French ministry, with offices at intervals along the corridors for squads of women typists at work among the green metal filing cabinets, and more imposing rooms for the senior officers, chosen from the police forces of thirty-six member countries. Chairman of the Commission is F.-E. Louwage, Inspector-General of the Belgian Sûreté; the Secretary-General is Louis Dulcloux, former director of the French C.I.D. The Rapporteur-General for Britain is Ronald Howe, head of the C.I.D. at Scotland Yard.

Jean Nepote has just received four young detectives from Britain, Sweden, Bolivia and Switzerland who had called for a special briefing. A telegram arrives during their discussion. Nepote reads it and passes the paper to his visitors. "Here is another problem, gentlemen," he says. The message reads, *"Try recover traces Marator Xavia wanted by Venezuelan and Mexican Police for heroin smuggling and false pretences stop believed arrived airwise Europe or North Africa stop client tall thin balding elegantly dressed nasal scar multilingual."*

In the next room to Nepote a counterfeit expert is explaining to a visiting F.B.I. agent the method of using the Commission's archives system; and a "dope" investigator, who occupies the same room, is on the telephone to a Sûreté detective who requires the background, if any, of two Italian-Americans overheard arranging a rendezvous by telephone with the Marseilles gang leader, François Paoleski.

The "Baron" And The Goya

Interpol's principal headaches are the drug traffic and counterfeiting. Chinese sailors are the principal importers of drugs, which are smuggled into the larger European ports and mailed to Paris, the world selling centre. But no country has a monopoly of counterfeiters. Interpol has perhaps the greatest compendium of forging knowledge and technique, and issues a secret publication, *Counterfeiting and Falsifications*, to keep its members informed on the latest forged "issues" and counterfeiters' personal trademarks.

There are, of course, the picturesque "jobs." Last summer a man entered the Agen Museum and asked to see their one and only painting by Goya. The visitor appeared to be one of rank and distinction; the curator proudly unlocked the gallery and left the gentleman raptly studying the picture. A few minutes later an old woman entered the building and asked if the curator had seen her son. At that moment the man emerged, greeted his mother and went off with her, after thanking the curator profusely. Under the visitor's mackintosh was the Goya, cut out of the frame.

Mother and son were traced to an hotel, where they had registered with a pet monkey, under the name of Aremberg van Levis—one of the thirty-six known aliases of "Baron" Alexandre Ludinghausen-Wolff, convicted previously in Rome, Trieste, Brussels, Liège and Paris for swindling, breach of trust, forgery and the use of false identity. Russian-born, the Baron had specialized in crafty, quick-profit "jobs" which are not punishable by more than a nominal sentence in the country chosen for the crime. With a wrinkled, kindly-looking old mother to give his designs a homely confidence, the monkey was a touch of honest eccentricity. Fortunately the Ludinghausen-Wolffs did not get very far with the Goya. They were found in a railway carriage at Lucerne and are now at Lausanne, behind bars.

The Husband Who Knew The Law

"The European racketeer, unlike the ordinary, risk-everything criminal, is often a brilliant man, whose brain has taken the wrong turn," Nepote says. "He knows his law inside out." Interpol recently arrested, in Tangiers, a well-known French confidence trickster. He had married an English woman in Britain and, six days later, on their honeymoon in Italy, decamped with her money and valuable jewellery. "The problem," Nepote explains, "is that French law does not recognize theft between husband and wife. There is nothing we can do about it now."

Sometimes a crook slips through Nepote's fingers, but he is a patient man and is prepared to wait. His principal complaint is that of almost any policeman. The courts, he says, are too lenient with criminals. In France, counterfeiting is punishable with hard labour for life, but six months' imprisonment, with suspension of sentence on probation for first offenders, is often all that forgers receive.

"You spend two years chasing a man all over Europe," a great French detective once said, "and another year briefing the Public Prosecutor's office; then, a few months later, a man taps you on the back in a bar and says: 'Here I am again; catch me if you can.'" THE END

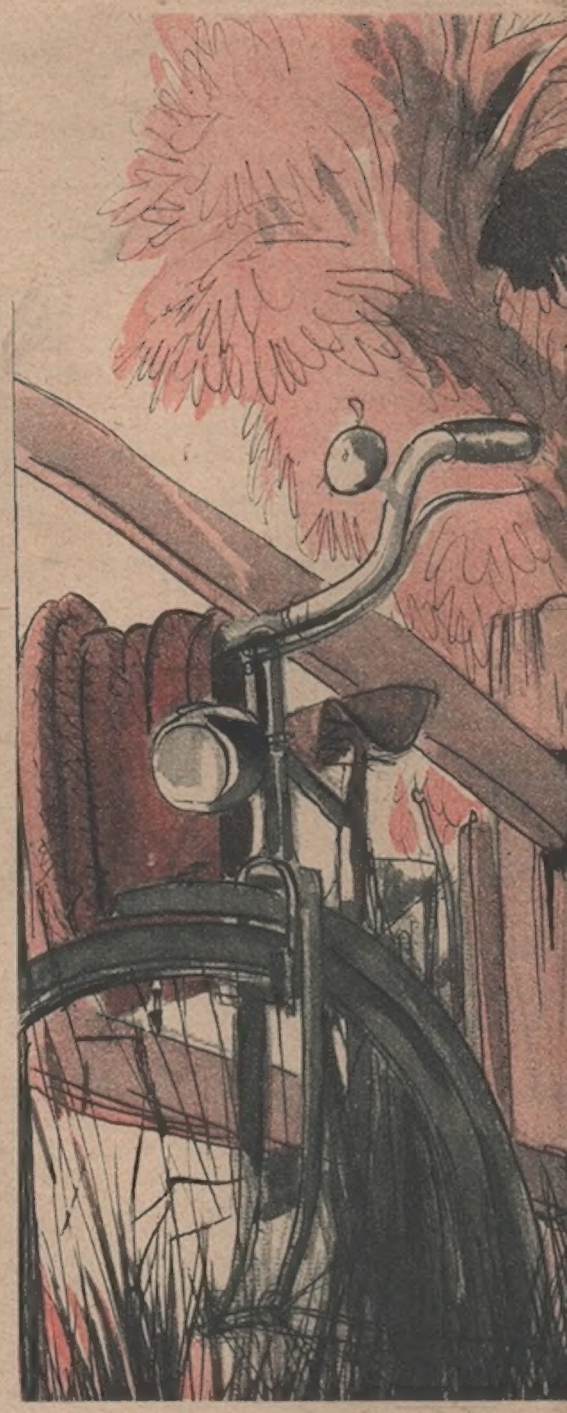
From this office Jean Nepote has arrested some of Europe's most slippery criminals

Ronald Howe (right), chief of Scotland Yard's C.I.D., greets Interpol heads in London

Sticky Wicket

by GORDON GLOVER

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN PIMLOTT



Poor Joe Partin! He'd be an outcast if he left the team. But if he refused Polly he'd stay a bachelor

DOGGEREL GREEN LIES JUST four miles from Great Mulching, and the two villages hate each other. For some hundreds of years, almost perpetual war was waged, and the carrying-off of cattle and women was an accepted hazard of village life. That stopped a long time ago, of course. Today, they have their annual cricket match.

This story concerns that match and, more particularly, the love of Joe Partin (Doggerel Green) for Polly Tether (Great Mulching).

Joe Partin was a splendid village cricketer, big shoulders, great courage, keen blue eyes and a bat that looked wide as a barn door to any who bowled up to it. And he bowled off-spinners that whipped in like turning hares. The rest of the team were all right, but Joe was the giant and nobody denied it. Take away Joe, and anything might happen. The taking away of Joe on the day of the Mulching match was unimaginable. And yet. . . .

For a Great Mulching girl Polly Tether was quite a knockout, and she had been calmly knocking out Joe for a good couple of years before the pair got caught up in forces far greater than themselves. Two forces, to be exact—the cricket match for one, and Polly's mother for the other.

Mrs. Tether, postmistress and shopkeeper of Great Mulching, was a widow, a tower of a woman, grim, uncompromising—Great Mulching through and through. And she was resolute in her refusal to accept Joe Partin as a serious suitor for Polly.

She could not, of course, prevent the couple meeting at whist drives, socials and dances; nor could she hinder their patient, devoted, if rather forlorn, courtship about the summery lanes of an evening—forlorn, because the pair of them knew that the bells of Great Mulching would never ring out for them until Mrs. Tether bade Joe to her parlour. And as she affected to be unaware of his very existence, this probability seemed remote. Polly had mentioned him once—on the day after Joe, with faltering hope, had first declared his passion.

The dialogue between daughter and mother had been brief.

"Joe Partin's such a nice chap, Mummy. He—he dances the Veleta beautifully."

"Well, he needn't think he's coming Veletaring about this house, my girl, and that's all there is to it."

"Oh, but Mummy——"

"Oh, but, nothing. *I'm* particular."

And that was that. This painful situation continued for two long years, until it changed abruptly on the evening of the second Thursday of July, two days before Doggerel Green was to receive Great Mulching on the home ground.

It was a beautiful evening as Joe Partin eased his bicycle up against the trysting gate by Biddles meadow, all unconscious that his dark ordeal was about to begin. Then Polly, on *her* bicycle, was racing, radiant, towards him. She leaped from her machine and threw herself exultantly into Joe's arms.

"Joe, Joe, *Joe*," she cried. "What do you think?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," said Joe, marvelling.

"It's mother. What do you think she said just now—just as we were finishing up our tea?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," said Joe.

"Joe, here were her very words: 'Polly, my girl,' she said, 'I've been thinking, and you can tell that Joe Partin of yours he can come up to tea on Saturday.' Oh, Joe, isn't it wonderful?"

Joe echoed her vaguely: "Come up to tea on Saturday."

"Isn't it *wonderful*, Joe, after all this time?"

Joe could only stammer in the misery of his mixed emotions: "But—but Polly, Saturday's the Mulching match—it's the Mulching match on Saturday."

"Oh, bother the old match," cried Polly.

"But, but—but I *can't*," faltered Joe. "You don't understand, Polly. What'd the chaps say."

"What does it matter what anyone says? Don't you see, Joe? She's asked you to *tea*."

THERE was a terrible silence during which—for Joe—the sun fell out of the sky and all the song birds ceased their music.

"Couldn't she—couldn't she make it Sunday?" he ventured.

"*Joe!*" Polly's voice was exasperated. "You *know* what mother is. Can you imagine my suggesting it? Oh, Joe, it's taken two years, and if we throw this chance away. . . ."

Joe could only mutter: "If it'd been any other match, if it'd been any match but the Mulching match," and he stood in another terrible silence staring at his boots. Then he suddenly barked: "I know—she's done it on purpose, that's what, to keep me out of the game. There's Great Mulching for you all over."

"*Joe!*" Polly's eyes glinted. "Joe, you know that's not true."

"How do I? You can tell *her*——"

"Oh, *Joe*. . . ." A very different Polly this time, melting, miserable, adorable.

He grabbed her into his arms, but all he could gasp over and over again was: "The Mulching match—the *Mulching* match."

When he parted from Polly that night the problem loomed more enormous than ever. How could he face the chaps of Doggerel Green with the unspeakable news that he proposed to let the side down on Saturday *for tea with a Mulching girl's mother*? No, he thought, it couldn't be done. Their stares of incredulity, their growing amazement as they learned that he was not joking—their once-friendly backs turned on him.

But then, again, there swam into his vision the glowing vision of his future with Polly Tether. It was his life, his whole life. Could he ruin it for a game of cricket?

Joe spent the Friday before the match in a ceaseless agony of indecision. Whatever he did would be disastrous. At one time he felt he would rather be dead than have to endure this any longer, for it came to this—if he got Polly, nobody in Doggerel Green would ever speak to him again, and if he played in the match then the doom of some fifty lovelorn, pining, lonely years lay ahead. It was a terrible dilemma. And no one could help him resolve it.

ON the Friday evening he had a quick, tense and painful meeting with Polly at the trysting gate. All he could do was to grab her and blurt: "I don't know, Polly darling, I *still* don't know." He'd vaguely hoped that perhaps Sunday had been mooted, but this was clearly not so. Polly looked at him with melting eyes and said, "Oh, *Joe*. . . ."

"I—I've got to think," he blurted. "I can't stop tonight. I've got to get back to Doggerel. I've got to see the chaps. I've got to think. Don't hurry me, there's a girl. I—I'll let you know tomorrow." And Joe tore himself away.

There were half a dozen of the team—including Tom Byers, captain of the side—in the Five Bells when Joe Partin, haggard and wretched, slouched up to the bar and ordered himself a

She leaped from her bicycle and threw herself into his arms. "Joe, Joe, what do you think?"

pint. They had been getting the ground ready earlier on, and Joe's absence from this important piece of routine had been very much noticed. A glance at him now showed that something was clearly amiss. They exchanged looks of concern behind Joe's firmly turned back; then Tom Byers opened the innings.

"What's up, Joe?" he asked pleasantly. "Been backing a loser?"

Joe turned round and regarded them with haunted eyes. "Arrr," he said vaguely. "Maybe."

"We missed you up the meadow, Joe," said Sammy Stone. "Where've you been hiding yourself?"

Then young Charlie Prebble guffawed and said, meaning no harm: "Courtin', mebbe."

Joe's expression changed. "That'll be enough of that," he snarled in such an un-Joelike voice that they all gaped. Joe took a deep breath, drained his pint, breathed out, took another breath and dropped his bombshell at the feet of Tom Byers: "I don't know that I'll be playing tomorrow."

Tom laughed pleasantly. "Oh, is *that* all?" he said. "Got anything else you'd like to shake out of your funny-bone?"

Joe was very white indeed. "I mean it," he said. "I don't know that I'll be playing. I'll let you know in the morning."

They stared—the terrible stare that Joe had felt probing him all through his sleepless night. "Go on," he said. "That's right—*stare*."

Tom Byers took his pipe out of his mouth. "Now take it easy," he said. "What's up? What's the trouble?"

Joe stared back in agony. Should he tell all, get it over and done with? Perhaps, he thought for a fleeting moment, they'd understand. But it was a very fleeting moment. Would he, in their position, have understood? The pillar of the side — the Mulching match — *tea with a Mulching girl's mother*?

"Tom," he said, "I've got to get home. I've got to get to bed. I've got to think. Let you know in the morning. 'Night all."

And with that Joe Partin turned round and strode out, banging the door of the Five Bells behind him. Sammy Stone was for jumping up there and then and dragging Joe back for an instant explanation, but he was dissuaded.

"There's more in this than meets the eye," said Tom Byers, "and I reckon we'd best leave Joe alone."

How Joe finally reached his decision must have been a tortuous process, but reach it he did. He was up at the window round about one in the morning, looking up and out over the meadow which was silver with moonlight—the meadow of the morrow's match. And suddenly it came to him that he was a grown man and not a child any more. It came to him, furthermore, that he wasn't going to quake and quiver in front of a silly old witch of a woman up at Great Mulching. It came to him that he and Polly could do as they pleased with their lives. There was time enough for that. But the Great Mulching match was imminent and urgent.

He got back into bed, all uncertainty gone. "I'll play," he breathed, and dropped into a deep and soothing sleep. He awoke to the sound of a natural phenomenon that had never entered his calculations at all, to an act of God that looked like taking the whole matter out of his hands. It was pouring, drenching, cataracting with rain from a cold, grey, sou'westering sky.

If this held the match would be rained off. It did, and the match was.

At four thirty precisely Joe Partin, blue-suited and mackintoshed, was admitted by the radiant Polly to the side door of the Great Mulching General Store and Post Office. He reflected, with grim satisfaction, that Mrs. Tether wouldn't have thought about this, either. The wind, in fact, had been taken out of both their sails—but here he was.

Polly squeezed his hand and whispered: "Oh, Joe, I'm ever so happy, aren't you?" He returned the squeeze, but couldn't find much to say. There wasn't time, anyway, for there before him, polite—if not cordial—was Mrs. Tether herself.

"So you're Robert Partin's boy, are you?" she said. "I've been thinking it was time I had a look at you. Sit down. I'm told you've been keeping company with my girl."

"Yes, ma'am," said Joe, sitting on the edge of his chair.

"So I thought I'd best have a look at you."

"Yes, ma'am," said Joe.

"So I asked you up—today."

"Yes, ma'am," said Joe.

"Because I wanted to see what sort of a young fellow you really were. That's why I asked you today. As it's turned out. . . ." She paused, and looked significantly out of the window at the drenching rain, then turned back to Joe with a keen glitter in her eyes. "It's a pity it's turned out so wet for the *cricket match*, Mr. Partin," said Mrs. Tether, "a great pity."

"Yes, ma'am," said Joe, and shifted on the edge of his chair.

"I'm particular," said Mrs. Tether, "about the sort of young man who keeps company with my girl."

Polly sighed and tapped her foot. "Oh, Mummy. . . ."

"And that'll be enough from you," said her mother. "No—don't you leave to get the tea just yet, because after what I've got to ask him perhaps Mr. Partin won't be stopping after all." She paused at this dramatic point, and levelled her keen, grey eyes at Joe. "Mr. Partin," she said, "what I want to know is this—are you *really* here for tea today?"

Joe licked his lips and stood up, gazing straight back at her. "No, ma'am," he said, "I am not."

Polly gasped in horror. "Joe!"

"Hold your tongue," said Mrs. Tether. "Well, Mr. Partin, go on—where are you, then?"

"Playing cricket, ma'am," said Joe, "in the fine, warm weather down on Doggerel Green, flaying the hide off the Mulching chaps, that's where, and now you know, ma'am."

"Joe," cried Polly. "Oh, Joe, how could you?"

"So now I'll be off, ma'am, and thank you," said Joe.

Mrs. Tether was not listening to Joe. "How *could* he?" she snapped to Polly. "I'll tell you—because he's the man I hoped he'd be, that's how. I can tell you, Polly Tether, that if your Joe Partin here had come snivelling round an old woman's skirts on the afternoon of the Doggerel-Mulching match he'd not have come a second time. *That's* why I asked him today, and now let's enjoy our tea."

THE END

The man who loves the Albert Hall

by D. M. INGHAM

"It can be used for a hundred things; music is not one of them," cracked Sir Thomas Beecham. Yet when Billy Williams heard the plan to pull it down he said, "They're crazy!"

BILLY WILLIAMS stood on the stage of the Royal Albert Hall and looked round its vast plush shadows. "Pull it down?" he said, incredulously. "They're crazy!" His gruff Cockney voice echoed round and round the empty hall. "They're crazy. . . they're crazy," it whispered.

Billy, for thirty years a member of the staff of the Hall and chief platform attendant for the last ten of them, was adding his comment to the controversy that has arisen now that the council of the Hall finds itself faced with an overdraft within £10,000 of its limit of borrowing, and immediately necessary repairs costing £75,000.

There have long been complaints against the Hall, but only recently has anyone come forward with the bold proposal to pull it down. This Samson was John Baker White, M.P. for Canterbury, who said it was not worth saving. "It is unique as a Victorian abomination. . . . It is a dirty, drab building inside and hideously ugly outside. Its system of drainage is antediluvian, and even £400,000 spent on repairs would not make it a better building," he wrote in an evening newspaper article.

Races, Ballet And Dinners

Billy Williams, the plump, white-haired, seventy-two year old attendant-cum-stage manager, speaks for the hundred employees of the Hall in repudiating such a heresy.

"What would they do without it?" he asks. "What other building in the world has six thousand seats, from every one of which can be seen the whole of the hall? Where else are symphony concerts, boxing matches, folk-dance displays, conferences, fancy-dress balls, Salvation Army rallies, political meetings, brass bands, table-tennis tournaments, ballet, Service reunions, and recitals, equally at home? Why, we've even had marathon races here—in 1909 a couple of blokes ran round and round the Hall for twenty-six miles. An Englishman, a chap named Gardiner from Lewisham, finally beat the Italian called Dorando. And dinners. Before the war we used to put on banquets for 2,000 people, with tables all round the Hall from top to bottom."

All Musicians Are Nervous

Billy, who looks rather like a beardless Santa Claus, has had the job of looking after every leading figure who has stepped on to the stage in the last two thousand times the Hall has been used. His job is to supervise the lay-out of the stage up to the time of the performance and then help the stars to get ready for their entrance.

He has seen more finger-nails bitten than any man in London. All musicians, even the most famous, are nervous. One of them makes him read bits out of the newspaper to take his mind off the coming ordeal. Another orders a pile of sandwiches and eats them steadily from the moment he is ready to the moment he goes on.

"Once I had to lock the door of the artist's room to keep a young and nervous pianist, making her first appearance, from running out of the Hall. I only let her out when it was time for her to go on and then led her by the hand through the doors leading on to the stage. Once she was on, she was fine," he recalls with satisfaction.

Part of his job is to protect the stars from hunters of souvenirs and autographs. Usually he stands at the entrance to the artist's room but when Donald Peers recently sang, he had to go up on to the stage after the performance to stop shrieking women admirers from mobbing their darling. "Like madwomen they were," Billy recalls, a worried look still on his face at the memory, "clumping and clawing at me, even pulling the buttons off my suit. 'Here,' I told one of 'em, 'you'll have my trousers down in a minute.' She didn't care. We managed to get him off the platform at last, and then I had to barricade the pass door."

Usually Billy can keep autograph-hounds at arm's length, and he has developed a faculty for spotting them at a glance. "They try to look so innocent, usually pretending to be a friend of the person they're after. But I ferret 'em out; they've got a hungry look about the eyes. They're as obvious to me as policemen or stablemen."

He has to be ready for more serious emergencies. When a wire snaps from the piano, as it did during the playing of the Grieg Piano Concerto not long ago, almost wounding the 'cello player, he has to call the tuner for a new one—and first aid, too, if necessary.

It was Billy's job to hurry out on to the stage when Eileen Joyce collapsed from the strain of playing too many concertos in one programme. "There she was, on the floor, and the orchestra just sitting there looking at her. I tried to bend down and pick her up, but I'm a bit too fat and I might have fallen over her and that would have made things ten times worse. So I said to a couple of musicians, 'Look sharp, there,' and organized their carrying her off."

Once, when a famous politician was due to speak, there was consternation because, as the minutes ticked nearer and nearer the time he was due to go on, there was no sign of his arrival. Finally, Billy was told to go outside the Hall and hustle him in when he did come. When he got outside he found the politician walking up and down the pavement. "Come on in, you're late," Billy told him.

"Not until I know if there's a large enough audience," was the reply.

"It's full up," Billy assured him, so the temperamental speaker finally agreed to come in.

When Churchill Was "Wild"

Another of Billy's clashes with a politician occurred when Winston Churchill was waiting to pass through the swing doors on to the stage. The meeting was already in progress, and the chairman had announced, "The next speaker will be the Rt. Hon. Winston S. Churchill," when the Prime Minister, as he then was, asked Billy to go on to the platform and move his desk a little.

But he and Churchill have something of the same appearance, and when Billy walked on to the stage it was he who got the thunderous ovation. When the real Churchill followed him a moment later, he was greeted with laughter. "He wasn't half wild with me," says Billy.

Out of his thousands of memories of the musical great, Billy specially remembers Yehudi Menuhin, who thought he had lost his pocket-book in the dressing-room, but sent Billy a handsome present when he found it again; Melba, who brought tears to his eyes as well as those of the Australian soldiers present when she sat down at the piano after a recital and played "Home, Sweet Home"; and Sir Henry Wood, who had to have a fresh carnation in his button-hole every time he went on to the platform.

Before he took his present job, Billy was one of the army of cleaners which prepares the Hall for its nightly (and sometimes daily) use. They used to wear top hats when he started just after the first World War, so as to look smart for the early arrivals.

999-year Seat For £100

Opening the piano on the stage today, Billy can look round and see many of the same faces he used to raise his top hat to. For the best 1,297 seats are always at the disposal of the same 350 people, the heirs of those who put up £100 each towards the building of the Central Hall of Arts and Sciences, as it was known before it was dedicated to the Prince Consort.

In return for your £100 you got a seat for 999 years (except on ten charity performances a year) and

Bouquets for Sonia Peters, singer—and Billy is there to hand them up

Billy Williams has a favourite story for sightseers: how he was once mistaken for Winston Churchill

could do with it what you liked. You also had the right to a voice in the administration of the Hall.

That was in 1867, when Queen Victoria laid the foundation stone. It opened four years later, one of the proudest achievements of Victorian England. The Royal Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851 gave £50,000 and the site at the rental of one shilling a year.

Visitors Come To Gaze

"It can be seen at once," a contemporary reporter recorded, "that the architect has taken for his model the old Roman amphitheatre, though with such important modifications as, happily, quite another kind of entertainment, and, unhappily, less genial skies, required." The lighting of the Hall, he went on, "is a novelty in itself . . . . nearly 7,000 gas jets, which can be lit by electricity in ten seconds."

It is still an impressive building, and every day visitors come just to look at it, whether there is anything on or not. The B.B.C. control room in Loggia Box No. 2 has made it even more famous than before.

Oval in shape, it is 219 feet long and 185 feet wide, but the best view is obtainable not from any of the seats but from the iron grid suspended inside the roof 135 feet above the centre of the arena. The first time Billy went up there he didn't like to look down, but after a while, when his duties as a cleaner permitted, he used to listen to concerts from this most perilous position. The acoustics are better there than anywhere else in the Hall. Inside the thickness of the walls is another complete theatre, used by the Central School of Dramatic Art, and a printing works for tickets, as well as dressing-rooms, offices and restaurants.

The owners of all this, the heirs of the original seat-holders, can be a nuisance sometimes. Standing—or, rather sitting—on their rights, they can legally demand to be present at almost every occasion, free of charge. Billy remembers how a couple of elderly women insisted on being present during a ball—and sitting in their own seats.

Hole In The Dance Floor

It was in vain that the manager explained that their seats would be covered by the dance floor, which is specially laid for each ball. They threatened legal action if they were not allowed in their property, and he finally had to give way. So, on the night of the dance, there was a hole cut in the floor, cordoned off, and guarded by an attendant to see that nobody fell down it. In the hole were the two old women, sitting steadfastly on their seats throughout the night, emerging now and again for refreshments, which were included free of charge in the entrance fee.

When he was manager, C. B. Cochran discovered that although nobody has yet done so, seat-owners had the legal right to unscrew their seats and take them home with them. These seats, with their further 916 years of free admission to the Albert Hall, are now valuable and, in addition to being left in their owner's will, may be sold outright or let for one performance. The highest price they have ever reached was £950 for a pair, but probably they could now be bought for much less.

This constant drain on the resources of the Hall is one of the main reasons why, at this year's annual meeting of the council, the President of the Board of Trustees, Sir John Wardlaw-Milne, had to appeal for "public-spirited individuals" to come forward to "save this historic hall." Besides the £75,000 which is needed for immediately necessary repairs, it is the opinion of the Ministry of Works that another £205,000 should be spent on desirable renovations.

Free Seats For Stewards

Lettings, which averaged exactly one a day last year, at 150 guineas, cannot cover more than a fraction of the cost. So it looks as though the Government will have to step in with financial aid; but if that happens, the seat-holders will almost certainly have to accept a sharp cut in their privileges. A special Act of Parliament would be necessary to effect a curtailment, but it would not be the first: in 1927 an Act made them liable to a £3 annual seat rate.

One cost that does not have to be met is for the stewards who show patrons to their seats. This is an honorary job, dating back to the first performance, when the Stewards of the Royal Household acted as ushers. In return for their services, the grave and dignified gentlemen who point out places and restrain latecomers until the end of a movement are given free seats.

A major complaint of those who say the Hall is not worth saving is the persistence of the echo. A critic once wrote: "In some seats practically nothing can be heard; in others every note is heard twice, so that many people have the satisfaction of hearing two concerts without extra charge."

Prayer Was Not Answered

Sir Thomas Beecham admits that during the war he prayed daily that it might be bombed (his prayers were not answered: it had only shrapnel wounds), adding: "It can be used for a hundred things. Music is not one of them."

Although the echo is still there, it is not nearly as bad as it was before the new aluminium ceiling was erected. Until recently there was a canvas velarium, and while the new roof was being put on a workman fell on to it. He screamed for help as his foot tore into it, and was rescued before it ripped completely under him. He had to spend several weeks in hospital suffering from shock.

Whatever the merits of the case against the Albert Hall, Billy Williams has many more arguments. "What would happen to the Chelsea Arts Ball and the Promenade Concerts if they pulled us down? Could they take the *spirit* of the British Legion Festival of Remembfance to Earls Court or the Harringay Stadium? No, it's nonsense to talk about pulling us down, just when concert halls are in short supply, and the labour is needed to build houses. They're crazy!"

With a slight shake of his white head, Billy left the stage, went through the swing doors and down the rabbit-warrens to his little room, where he slept for most of the war. And only the echo remained. THE END

STOLEN JOURNEY (10) by OLIVER PHILPOT

I dodge recapture by inches

Oliver Philpot

No matter which way I went now the enemy was all around me. I was cornered and only a stone's throw away was freedom. . . . Continuing his dramatic real-life adventure, Oliver Philpot, third man in the famous Wooden Horse escape from a German p.o.w. camp, tells how he broke into the enemy docks in an attempt to slow away to Sweden

Struggling up the cable, my arms aching badly, I came to the light patch visible to the guards

DURING THAT SUNDAY AFTERNOON, October 31, 1943, an onlooker could have seen a black-hatted figure in an R.A.F. great-coat making his way out of the centre of Danzig over to the east. The Storm-trooper and his girl, the German Navy men walking about in excited groups, the civilians out on their Sunday stroll—one and all walked past him and never gave him a second glance. He was clearly busy, going somewhere; his business was not their business. He looked respectable; he was properly shaven and had a clean collar. In other words, Jon Jörgensen, Norwegian business man, alias Oliver Philpot, R.A.F. escapee, was accepted.

I crossed a bridge, and, unexpectedly, for a time got clear of most other pedestrians. I looked ahead, and there, approaching me, was a little man in a peaked cap, poorish clothes and wearing a yellow armband. I was always ready to adapt my tactics to take what the gods offered, and if here was a Jew, labelled as such by the harsh Nazis, on a fairly deserted road, I might as well talk to him and get some help on to my ship. His people were being herded daily into gas chambers, and I felt fairly confident of his not giving me away and quite possibly helping a bit.

I crossed the road—we were walking in opposite directions—and as I passed to the right-hand side of the footpath I saw his yellow arm-band in rather greater detail a fraction of a second before I spoke. I kept my mouth shut, and walked straight past him. His armband had on it a very prominent swastika.

Hideout In A Forest

My road went on and on. It branched after a time, the left-hand fork going to Weichselmunde, five kilometres away, the signpost said. This, then, was my route, but there was time to kill first. I took the right-hand fork and made for Danzig-Heubude, a sort of outlying village apparently. Now and again a couple of low, yellow tram carriages, linked together, came past. No. 4, I saw. The walk was turning out to be longer than I had expected, neither was I deliberately seeking exercise, because all my energy, mental and physical, would be needed at the key point of the operation, the docks, that evening.

At last the flat, cultivated countryside gave way to a few houses set on either side of a winding and straggly village street—Heubude. I walked on. As the village came to an end I arrived at a cemetery on the left. I wondered if there were any dry vaults to hide in, and earmarked it as a possible place of refuge. Beyond the cemetery I saw what I wanted—a good, big forest. I turned off into it, along a well-trodden

Continued on page 22

Prospects bright : father, Rodney (left) and Garry settled down for a snug first evening

Caravan holiday with father

by JOHN MAY

Rodney did the cleaning, Garry enjoyed cooking. Father was chauffeur, housekeeper, shipmate and odd man. Next time they'll take mother

TOWARDS TEATIME WE passed through moorland that was part of the New Forest. Wild ponies wandered across the road in front of the car as if they owned the place, which virtually they do. Finally we found the corner we were looking for. Spotting our number plate, a girl skipped out of the door as we pulled up. "Your caravan's round here, sir," she said. The Hampshire accent was as thick as cream.

The kids had unthinkingly expected "a coloured gipsy caravan on four wooden cart-wheels." I was nearly as surprised myself. Here we were hitching on to a brand new mobile home, a streamlined 1950 job in cream and chromium, price around £350. A casual remark I'd made a few weeks before was bearing exciting fruit.

With petrol off coupons, I'd wanted to take the family on a roaming holiday. "Why don't you and the three boys try it on your own first?" said my wife unselfishly. "I don't know whether we could manage the babies in one of those things." As I had never driven with a caravan behind, and we'd never even slept in one, a trial trip seemed sensible.

I found out from a friend that our car was about right for an average four-berth job. "One-and-a-half hundredweight of caravan per horse-power of car," he said. We picked one of the firms who hire to tow away and booked hopefully.

Apart from adjusting brakes, the only alteration to the car was fitting a towbar. "Brackets supporting the bumper generally can't take it," warned the catalogue. Following the specification it gave, a local agricultural engineer fitted us with a particularly massive version. I'd been humming "The Green Hills of Somerset" rather apprehensively for several days. "If my engine is as strong as your towbar," I told him, "mountains won't stop us!"

Young Richard unluckily came out in spots the day before our departure, and eventually I set off with a crew of only two: my eldest son, Rodney, and Garry, fourteen. Our ordinary car policy covered third-party risks with a trailer; most of them do. But now with so much gleaming coachwork to care for, I was relieved to go into the hire firm's office and pay a fee which included insurance for the caravan.

We checked the crocks, cutlery and cooking utensils, signed the inventory, and prepared to move off. "Where are we going to camp, Dad?" In a neighbouring meadow was a wide "street" of caravans where people lived permanently. There was a water tap, the pleasant sounds of soft radio music and people chatting, lights in some of the windows—and a vacant site.

The choice was apparently this or go back to the New Forest, find the warden, pay a shilling and park alone in the wilderness.

Warning From The Expert

In the evening light the caravan seemed immense: seven feet wide, twice as long, and about as tall as a single-decker bus. It weighed nearly a ton. We had already driven more than a hundred miles. We had no connection for a caravan rear light, as I did not intend towing after dark. Was it wise to start towing for the first time now, so late in the day?

"It's amazing," said the girl in the office, "how gateposts sometimes chase after caravans and crash into them!" We drove slowly into position between two residents, and wound down our legs. First day's tour: one hundred yards.

Moving the suitcases, food and holiday gear from the car to the caravan and settling in took an hour. Much exploring of cupboards and lockers, like newlyweds in a new home. Rodney carried the cylinder of gas outside and connected up the rubber tube. We lit the gas lights and pulled the curtains.

My wife had packed a tuckbox for us, and we sat down to cold beef and salad. Garry warmed the apple tart in the oven, and made coffee. We did our first batch of washing up in the sink, and put the flaps down again, converting this and the stove back into a sideboard.

Snug and fed, I saw holiday prospects blooming brighter. The boys chose the forward divan and began pulling it out to make their double bed. We tried dividing the place into two separate bedrooms with the wardrobe door (double hinged especially), but decided we didn't need the privacy. Suddenly Garry asked: "Where did you put the blankets, Dad?" Sheets and pillow slips we'd brought—but blankets none. Thankful now that we weren't miles out on the moor, I groped out into the darkness to knock up the store-keeper.

At 6 a.m. Rodney was making tea. We needed it. During that first short night we learned a lot: (1) A caravan soon cools down when no lights are burning. (2) A dozen blankets are not too many for three people in an English summer (and it's cheaper to bring your own than hire). (3) Boys not used to sharing a double bed pull all the clothes off one another.

That evening we swapped ends, making two single beds side by side for Rod and Garry. The under part of my new bed was at the top of the folding table, but the rubber mattress knew its job. By now we were fifty miles farther west, and felt like seasoned caravanners. Lulled by the sound of waves dashing on a shingly shore, we slept soundly and long.

That Seagoing Sensation

Caravan fans boast that their craft are as picturesque in a country setting as a yacht skimming past the pier. I prefer the yacht for beauty. But we got the seagoing sensations when I drove too fast down a hill trying to compensate for crawling up it. The caravan dipped her prow, and the car seemed to bound over the waves. She wagged, and we snaked like steering abeam choppy seas.

Once was fun, but enough. It was dangerous for the contents of the caravan, other road users, and ourselves. We calmed down and found that, around the 30-m.p.h. limit for towing,

The May boys thought house-helps should be tied on the spare wheel

progress was majestically smooth.

Traffic was invariably courteous. Garry kept a sharp lookout for overtaking vehicles by sighting through the fore and aft windows of the caravan. I made signals at arm's length so that other drivers could see them despite the van being wider than the car. Rodney acted as navigator, reading our map against road signs (according to him they frequently disagreed), so that we should not overshoot turnings.

New Reversing Technique

We began by looking back nervously to see whether cyclists we passed had been shoved off the road to kick in the ditch. I took corners unnecessarily wide, thinking the caravan would tend to cut in. But a glance at our tracks on a wet surface showed the van followed exactly where the car went, due to the towbar being well behind our rear wheels.

The first time we took the wrong road, I tried to reverse the caravan up a side lane to turn round and go back. It was on the righthand side, which theoretically made the job easier; I could look back from the driving seat and see where the caravan was going. In fact, the thing tangled and jibbed all over the place. Finally we unhitched and manhandled it round, the drill recommended for awkward occasions. Next time, when I remembered to lock the overrun brakes, she backed perfectly.

These brakes steadied the car reassuringly, and prevented the van shoving us too fast down hills. We changed into a lower gear to descend a sharp Dorset dip marked one-in-seven, and proceeded smoothly. I had been told the trick of re-starting up a hill with the caravan at an angle, so as to let the car move before feeling the full load—but we took no chances. I kept the revs going, changed down early, and didn't worry about bullying the gears a bit. The kids provided a caustic commentary

Before we left on Sunday morning for this tryout of the towing game, I'd had a chat with some of the old hands. Pulling up for the night—could it be done anywhere? And what were farmers like about caravans? "You'll be all right travelling west," a local said. "But London way they get wonderful sticky, look."

The Caravan Club, the A.A., the R.A.C., and the Camping Club all have directories of sites, the lists being exclusive to members. But many caravanners of experience prefer to roam without a timetable or plan, finding a site where they happen to be when they stop. As a beginner, I was glad of the suggestion that we should make for Bridport.

We pulled up in the wide main street to ask the way, turned left at the town hall, and a mile out of the town came to the little harbour hamlet of West Bay. A shipbuilding centre and the port of Wessex when ships were wooden, it was now the kind of unexploited place that I love. Across the river was a model site for caravans, with the camp supervisor sharing a white-painted wooden office with the harbour master. We asked for a pitch, and put the kettle on for tea.

Tidiness Is Essential

We settled down to learning the tricks of living in miniature. It was easy enough if you kept things tidy; chaos indescribable if you neglected to fold up your bedding for the daytime. A shop fixed our radio so that it worked again. But apart from eating and sleeping, we were outdoors all the time. It was a handy spot for driving into Dorset, Devon or Somerset, and the coast was a string of entrancing seaside places.

One morning we woke with the wind rocking us, and rain lashing the roof. It sounded worse inside than it was, but we were thankful we had the door away from the prevailing wind. The screw-down rubber-flanged windows didn't weep a single drop. We took turns with the gumboots, put down a newspaper for doormat, and wondered what to do.

I scribbled wish-you-were-here postcards to everyone at home, with a comic one for mother-in-law: a man pushing a pramful of kids and saying, "We must keep on having them; my wife's maternity benefit is the only income I've got!" The boys wrote out a fictitious football league, played several sets of matches by turning up playing cards to determine scores, and worked out each team's points, goals for and against, and position in the table. But even this palled, and the rain went on.

Feeling like rabbits escaping from an overcrowded hutch, we finally drove to a pub for lunch. It was the best cure for wet-day blues, and a treat for once to be let off cooking.

Apart from no dairyman trusting you with a milk bottle, the biggest disadvantage of the roaming life is that you take your sanitation where you find it. Our water jack held only two gallons of drinking water, and we had no chemical closet aboard. So West Bay's dustbins, lavatories and wash house made life considerably more comfortable.

Rodney and Garry felt strongly that a caravan's wheels should keep turning. They tired of rows of near neighbours who hampered their evening kickabout with a tennis ball, and they had little sympathy with people who keep their caravans on one site the whole summer. I recognized the youthful point of view, too, but could also see the advantage of having a caravan as a "portable bungalow" for moving, say, once or twice a year.

Luck At The First Farm

So we paid our camping dues, and moved on. This time we drove northwards through Yeovil and Castle Carey into the heart of Somerset. Nearing Shepton Mallet we turned off the main road, and tried our luck at the first farm.

The farmer readily let us park in a meadow opposite—ten green acres all to ourselves! He brought his wife to look inside the caravan. We took his son and daughter with us on a trip to Cheddar the same afternoon, and later we had supper together in the farmhouse. They presented us with a huge lump of their own farmhouse cheese—and the question of paying for parking was firmly squashed.

Too soon the day came to head for home. Except for dust, mud and legitimate wear, we'd mercifully done little damage to the caravan. We made sure at the farm that there were no cows likely to come and horn the panelling. By packing the crockery and carefully stowing everything else before moving, we avoided breakages with the exception of one gas mantle.

Although there were only three of us in a caravan for four, the cost of the holiday was reasonable on a per head basis. At the height of the season, mid-July to mid-September, hiring a caravan like this costs nine guineas for the week. Fitting a towbar cost me about £2. Parking fees average half a crown a night. So the price for four people would be a basic £3 each, plus petrol, food, and spending money.

Twenty-four Hour Duty

Rodney and Garry made ideal holiday mates for each other. I was the odd man. But acting as chauffeur, housekeeper, mother, father and "shipmate" to only a couple of kids for twenty-four unrelieved hours a day was heavy weather enough at times. Three would have sunk me.

I came to two decisions: bachelor holidays are best with other "bachelors" of a like age; family holidays *must* include mother. Next time we shall expand the accommodation by letting the boys sleep in a tent, which they would thoroughly enjoy.

It was grand to be independent of seaside landladies and fixed-time hotel meals, to have no permanent address, and to be able to "up anchor" and away in a matter of minutes.

Against this, we had to do our own housekeeping. Clearing up one day, Rodney said: "If I had a caravan of my own it would be a shambles in a couple of days!" Garry enjoyed cooking. But both seemed to think it would be a better holiday with some sort of house-help tied on the spare wheel, to be brought into use when required.

We saved labour all we could. Tinned food made catering easier. We took seven pounds of potatoes, but did not eat one. Instead, we got our carbohydrates by raiding cake shops.

Pigs, People A id Fish

I am pretty sure the roving holiday did the boys good; even this limited kind of travel broadens the mind. In a brief week they explored half a dozen assorted seaside places, a dairy farm and a fruit farm, Mendip cliffs and caves, several caravan sites and miles of beautiful countryside. They learned something about motoring and map-reading. They met pigs, people, and a stranded cuttlefish that squirted ink at them. I found that towing in unfamiliar country made me a lot more attentive to signs, road manners, and the Highway Code in general. Some of it stuck after the holiday was done.

But my most vivid memory is of a Dutch coaster, loaded with shingle from the beach, leaving West Bay's tiny harbour. A grey ship, patches bright with red lead, she slid out with her diesel engine coughing a slow waltz time. We walked along beside her to the end of the jetty, the kids grinning as a sailor wiped his eyes with his shirt in mock grief at parting.

We felt a bit like that ourselves when we pulled out the last suitcase, and left the caravan behind. THE END

"You can take one quick look round a café and go out thinking you've inspected it," says Kenneth Marsden. "Or you can poke around"

Lifeguard in a lounge suit

by STANFORD O'BRIEN

He probes a town for germs—but not in the home. Even sanitary inspectors marry girls who know more about the kitchen than they

NOT LONG AGO, the tenants of a council-house near London were visited by a man who looked at their leaking roof, worm-eaten stairs and broken windows. He agreed that these were not satisfactory, and a few weeks later they were put in order. But when the visitor returned he was greeted with a jug of water from an upper window and a volley of abuse. "If we'd wanted this old place patched up," shouted the tenants. "We'd have got the council to do it. But we thought you could get us a new house."

That story is typical of the public lack of understanding of a sanitary inspector's duties and difficulties, thinks Reginald Johnson, the secretary of their 5,000-strong association. "We're still thought of as a music-hall joke—the man who comes to smell the drains. But we're responsible for the purity of everything you use, even of the air you breath."

Sometimes the work of Johnson's colleagues reaches the public eye, as when a Bond Street restaurant was heavily fined for keeping a kitchen swarming with rats, or a question was asked in Parliament about the use of an insecticide which might "cause the hair to fall out, the nails to drop off, and lead to sterility." But they must be ready to deal with anything from the cloud of flying ants which fell into the hair of girls in a textile mill to spoilt washing caused by a factory chimney emitting black smoke for more than the permitted two minutes every hour.

Typical of Britain's sanitary inspectors is Kenneth Marsden, deputy chief at Watford, Herts, a youngish man with pale hair and a small moustache, who is, like many of his profession, a pipe-smoker. It is due to his department and the local medical officer of health that this semi-industrial borough had an impressively clean bill of health last year, with a low infantile death rate and not a case of diphtheria.

Slaughterhouse Duty

The biggest work in Marsden's area—which may extend to a population of 150,000—is supervising the town's slaughterhouses, where two of his six inspectors are always on duty. By law, all animals must be stunned before killing, either with a captive-bolt pistol or electrically.

"Slaughterers are as kindly as the next man," Marsden goes on, "and if they're sent a calf that's been ill-treated they become really indignant." The main reason for his presence is to check that no food unfit for human consumption reaches the shops. Over seventy-five per cent of the cows killed in Watford last year were unhealthy in some part, and on a national average three times as much meat was condemned in 1948 as in 1938. More intense inspection is partly responsible for this change, but Marsden thinks that examination by the Ministry of Food before it buys livestock could be more efficient.

If a slaughtered calf is found to be tubercular its mother is traced by veterinary officers and destroyed. This leads Marsden to another side of his work. Dairy produce—from cheese which may harbour mites to eggs fit for use only at elections—must be tested against infection. Ice cream stalls once called for special attention, but Marsden thinks that since the war ended ices have greatly improved in both hygiene and food value.

There is hardly a thing eaten or drunk that he does not regularly inspect. Sometimes his discoveries are alarming, as when there was found in a café some tins of a dog food prepared from skinned rats; sometimes humorous, like the bottles of coffee essence which had set up a pressure by fermentation and, when opened, shot their contents to the ceiling like Roman candles.

Marsden has the largest "grocery list" in Watford, but he cannot check everything sold to the public. "When you've been sampling foodstuffs for ten years," he says, "you know where to look for trouble." For instance, there is no point in buying dozens of bags of a reputable brand of flour which inspectors all over England are testing as well—though, even with commodities prepared under ideal conditions, an odd piece of machinery or dead mouse *may* get in. It is when anything is in short supply that Marsden looks for adulteration. "Just recently," he says, "the spiv firms have been bleaching black pepper to make it look like the rarer white kind."

A Girl Goes Shopping

That may not be unhealthy, but the sanitary inspector protects the public purse as well as its stomach. So when he suspects such a thing is happening, Marsden sends out one of the girls from his office to buy an ounce of pepper in each of a dozen shops. "My 'housewives' aren't trying to tempt shopkeepers to break the law," he points out, "but we must see what is really being sold over the counters, and I'm well known in this town."

If a foodstuff is suspect, samples for analysis may be taken with elaborate legal safeguards: but this is rarely necessary, for relations between the inspectors and the

shopkeepers are nowadays good, with the latter realizing that it is in their own interest not to sell bad goods. From all the samples taken last year —ranging from raspberry jam to olive oil and from Seidlitz powders to chocolate spread—only six were found to infringe the Food and Drugs Acts,' and only two cases were brought to court.

"Information received" plays a part in his work, for the 9,000 examinations his department made last year were supplemented by the investigation of over 1,000 complaints from the public. Most of the latter were more helpful than an anonymous Madame X, who kept complaining of a pile of fish refuse outside her door—which Marsden was as keen as she to get rid of—but who failed to give him her address.

No Revolution In The Home

"This job's what you make it," explains Marsden. "You can take one quick look round a café, have a cup of tea, and go out thinking you've inspected it. Or you can poke round, suggesting that a table could be covered with something easier to keep clean or a skirting treated with metal to keep out the rats." That is the method he uses in Watford, where he believes that public relations are good because shops and restaurants appreciate the interest taken by his team of inspectors.

He has theories about washing-up, but admits that the efficient system of rinsing plates in hot soapy water, transferring them to hot clean water and then allowing them to dry without wiping with disease-carrying cloths, is not practical in the home. "You'd go crackers if you tried to revolutionize things there," he says. "Besides, even sanitary inspectors marry girls who know more about the kitchen than they do."

Even so, Marsden is never quite off-duty. One night, walking along a street, he caught a very slight smell which his training told him was a gas leak. He roused the owner of the house and together they discovered that a main had broken under the floor. "An ordinary passer-by would have noticed the smell when it got stronger—but by then it might have been too late," he says.

Kenneth Marsden first worked in a health department at the age of sixteen. He got interested in his job and began to study its principles, which led to a year's course at Liverpool University in law, chemistry and biology.

The Great Cheese Pie Mystery

After four years of study, he passed his twenty-first birthday and an examination in twelve subjects ranging from ventilation to statistics, and was allowed to qualify; but, like most present-day officials, he went on to specialize in such topics as smoke abatement. With a final course in administration, an inspector is lucky to be fully qualified by twenty-seven, and even then he is still learning. A wartime addition to the national diet meant that Marsden had to study the anatomy and diseases of whales.

Much of his work is concerned with such matters as raising chicken-coops to keep them clear of rats, clearing fly-blown dumps of refuse from vacant lots, or deciding whether landlord or tenant should provide a new dustbin; and these accounted for most of the 1,600 "defects remedied" last year. But now and then less usual incidents turn up in the case-book. In an outbreak at a girls' school, a cheese pie was blamed until it was realized that pupils who had turned up their noses at it were equally affected. Analysis of the pie revealed nothing toxic, and it was at last concluded that the lunch—though scientifically harmless—had been so unappetising that it had caused an outbreak of upset stomachs through hysterical mass-suggestion. In another case, a school lunch was acquitted after metallic poisoning had been traced to unplated moulds used for making "lollies."

A small mystery came Marsden's way when an old woman told him that she was troubled by a disgusting smell of fish. She explained that this only came on just before she got into bed, and vanished again before she was asleep. For quite a while Marsden was baffled by this queer fish; then, on an impulse, he switched on the bedroom light. After a few minutes the smell arrived, and was then easily traced to a cheap lampshade joined with a fish glue which charred when the bulb warmed it.

More important detective work takes place in tracking down the mysterious carriers of infectious disease, people of cleanly habits who spread deadly germs to which they are themselves immune. At Bristol recently an outbreak of typhoid was traced to a stream in which those infected had bathed; from that to a sewage works, from that to a workhouse, and from that to one of the inmates who had never been suspected of carrying the disease.

A more baffling case was at a Devon seaside resort, where again typhoid broke out. A long and careful questioning of the sufferers showed that, with one exception, they had either bathed in a certain cove or eaten ice cream from a certain stall. It was hard to see how there could have been a connection, but it was found that a sewer outlet had broken near the cove, and that its contents were rich in typhoid germs. The sewer was then traced back, yard by yard, until it was found from which house drain the bacteria were entering it. They came from the flat of one of the assistants at the ice cream stall, whose wife proved to be a carrier. To complete the picture, the one victim who had neither bathed nor eaten ice cream was his sister-in-law; but it had taken over five years' work to solve the mysteries.

Epidemics Mean Sleepless Nights

Such outbreaks — whether of typhoid, food poisoning or the recent disquieting polio epidemics—mean weekend work and sleepless nights, but even without them the inspector's work is not easy. For frequently Marsden is on slaughterhouse duty, which means a 9 a.m. till 9 p.m. shift: a twelve-hour day for which he receives no overtime.

Marsden is also responsible for organizing lectures and exhibitions to encourage hygiene, especially in food handling. Finally, reorganization of such services as the N.F.S. has bequeathed certain unexpected local government duties to his department: he is responsible for the enforcement of the Shop Acts, and even for fire precautions in public buildings. "Fire escapes may sound a long way from the usual business of a health department," he admits. "But, after all, being burned to death is a pretty unhealthy matter."

Johnson thinks that many complaints are made directly to the health department which the landlord would have seen to if he had been approached first, but his main advice to the householder is to ensure a healthy home by covering up food against flies and mice, seeing that there are no slight leaks of water which will give rise to dry rot, not leaving warm food around, and not thinking that, because matter which is causing a bad smell has been deodorized, or even disinfected, it has been removed.

Any matter of public safety—from the storage of petrol to the purity of oil used in fried fish shops—is the responsibility of Johnson's colleagues, and in the country they must see also to the cleanliness of well water. The age of death carts and crosses on doors, of spiced oranges carried against the stench from open sewers, and of the King's Touch for the King's Evil, has passed into one of congested populations which would be impossible but for a service covering far more than is usually meant by "sanitation."

Our civilization is unlikely to perish by a black death or great plague unless spread deliberately—and against that horror the health officers are the first line of defence.

But for all the long training and responsibility of the work it is, by present-day standards, as underpaid as the schoolteacher's. Very few inspectors earn over £750 a year, and all spend most of their life in the £400-£600 bracket. Most salaries are paid equally from the Exchequer and the local council.

Still, it would be wrong to suggest that Johnson or Marsden are discontented men, or that despite low pay and long hours there are not plenty of recruits to their profession. "For there's lots of variety," they say. "And before you're tired of one job, another comes along." This variety is shown even by the animals which play so large a part in their work. At one end of the scale are minute disease-engendering germs, and at the other a circus elephant which may be annoying the neighbours.

Johnson is a specialist in the insect world, and was called in when office-workers in a country house found themselves plagued by small black creatures. These looked like furniture beetles, but no wood had been bored into, and at last Johnson identified them as the rarer "drug-store" beetle. It remained to find the nest, but not till after many failures did he think of investigating a tin of dog biscuits. When this was opened it was found swarming with breeding beetles which had bored deep into the heart of the hard biscuits to make their homes.

The Rats That Won't Bite

Grey squirrels and "silver fish" are not uncommon pests, and even killer owls have had to be dealt with. But worst of all is the common, destructive, disease-carrying rat. Marsden's local authority employs three "rodent operatives." "Mostly we use modern poison methods," he says. "And rat poison is a thing best left to experts—it's caused a good many domestic tragedies." But there are always a few poison-shy rats that won't bite, and when he is reduced to those, Marsden goes over to old-fashioned rat catcher ways and puts down a gin. "When we catch the last offender," he says, "he turns out to be a wily old bird with a wise look, who's tasted poison before and lived to know what isn't good for him."

Domestic animals may be pet or pest according to which side of the garden fence you live. Marsden has little trouble with keepers of pigs, poultry or rabbits, and sees no need for the reintroduction of prewar bye-laws against keeping livestock in residential areas—though he admits that goats can be unpopular.

He says of cats: "*One* can be trouble enough in a tidy garden, and old ladies who can't look after themselves often fill their houses with dozens. You know, I still can't decide how many cats go to make a legal nuisance." And such insoluble problems are quite a long way removed from bad drains. THE END

Marsden insists that only spotless hands touch food—especially sausages

JOHN BULL July 8 1950

Picasso's every scribble is a blank cheque

by ELKAN ALLAN

The richest artist's effortless way with any cadger is to do a lightning sketch and hand it over—it'll fetch at least a hundred pounds

THIS SUMMER the French Riviera has a new attraction: a statue by Picasso is being erected in the market square of Vallauris, the town where the sixty-eight year old painter, most controversial artist in the world, has made his home. It is called "Man With a Sheep," and is a fairly straightforward representation of a man holding an animal—you can see what it is at a glance, and the eyes are in the right places. Like all his recent symbolic work, the theme is "Peace."

In the two years he has lived in the quiet little pottery-making town, the presence of Pablo Picasso has become a magnet to draw modern art-lovers from all over the world in the hope of seeing him at work, for he has become a legend as well as the richest artist alive.

Not that it is difficult for the perspicacious to get to see him, and when one of the needy, who always badger the rich, asks him for a little money to keep the wolf away, he finds it simplest just to scribble a quick sketch on a piece of scrap paper and hand it over. The grateful recipient hurries to an art dealer and gets at least £100 for it.

The Golden Touch

Never before in the history of the world has there been any artist commanding such prices for his slightest effort or who could mint money the way Picasso can. It is literally true that if he sat down and sketched a private banknote "to the value of 100,000 francs," he could exchange it for this amount. For a major work he can get anything up to £3,000.

Some people are famous for exploring unknown lands; others for discovering new principles of science. Picasso's importance lies not only in being accepted by many people as a great painter, but in being the explorer, the discoverer and the leader of "ultra-modern" art. He did not invent it—that was done 4,000 years ago by primitive painters who stressed in their cave-drawings what impressed them, without any attempt to achieve an exact copy of the animals and scenes they drew.

When Picasso discovered this in the work of African tribes, he applied it to his own experience and work. When he painted women dancing, for instance, he distorted their bodies to give the *idea* of dancing. Conservative painters achieve a photographic effect, but Picasso and his followers sacrifice the immediately recognizable in their attempts to get across the *feeling* of what they are painting.

It is as if the old sort of pictures were straightforward mirrors reflecting the world as seen by the eyes. And the new sort—from Picasso onwards—were a kind of focusing mirror for *all* the emotions: sounds, touch, taste, smell, and the whole feeling of the world, the objects and people in it—and the spirit of the time. So, with the world in a chaotic state, it is no wonder that his paintings should be chaotic.

He Lives Modestly

There is no sign of the turmoil of his canvases in the outward demeanour of Picasso. For the richest workman in the world, he lives a quiet and modest life. His only outward show of wealth is a huge chromium-and-grey Oldsmobile convertible in which he purrs up and down the hill to the sea. His house is small and, from the outside, hardly different from that of the radio repair man who lives next door. He smokes the cheaper brands of cigarettes, and much of the time he sits at the bench of the large workroom of the Madoura Pottery, decorating plates and jugs like one of the other four workmen in the room.

It is difficult for the stranger seeing him there for the first time to believe that the little wrinkled man in the scarf and beret is Picasso. He does not even look like his photographs, which show a grim and rather forbidding person. When he hops down off his high stool to greet you, you see how short (five feet three inches) he is, and, as he bows you out into the sunlit courtyard, you feel he is like a little gnome with the face of a walnut. His handshake is soft and he stands smiling and friendly. Only his huge eyes are animated.

Beach Is His "Court"

Every day a score of visitors come to the Pottery and ask to see him. When he is too busy, they wait until next morning at eleven o'clock, when the flashy car arrives at the Cavallero Beach in Golfe Juan, within sight of the Aly Khan's villa, and out of it steps Picasso, his children, two-year-old Claude and one-year-old Paloma, their mother, the young Françoise Gillot, the nursemaid, the chauffeur and one or two of the guests who are always staying with the Picassos.

The beach is his "court," where he rules like an old tribal chieftain with his shiny, near-bald head and naked, sun-browned body covered only with a pair of bright yellow shorts. The young people, the up-and-coming artists he likes to have around him, exchange the latest gossip in the world of art, while the visitors timidly or brashly present themselves to the Master, as he is called locally. He listens courteously to what they have to say, rarely giving his own opinion, and at the end of an hour he has a quick swim and then is driven up the hill again to get on with his work.

Lately this has consisted mainly of pottery design and decoration, but he has a studio in another part of Vallauris, where he retires occasionally and shuts himself up to paint. Then nobody is allowed to see what he is doing until he emerges with the products of a new "period." His latest work has been in frank imitation of children's painting—a child can do it, but few adults.

Since he has lived in Vallauris he has produced thousands of platters. Working furiously, often on three at once, he has filled several large rooms in the nearby Grimaldi Museum with plates painted with human faces and animals, vases and jugs of weird shapes, and even odd bits of tiles with quick sketches baked on them.

Pottery is the latest in a life of constantly changing enthusiasms. He started as a child of ten, copying his father, who was a poorly paid painter of what the boy later called "dining-room pictures, the kind with partridges and pigeons, hares and rabbits." This was at Málaga, Spain, where he was born in October, 1881, and christened Pablo Diego José Francisco de Paula Juan Nepomuceno Crispín Crispinano de la Santissima Trinidad Ruiz y Picasso.

He was a poor scholar, and his teacher found he could get him to remember his multiplication tables only by copying them down—but when young Pablo did so, he not only copied figures and words, he

"He is like a friendly gnome." Picasso with Françoise and Paloma

Three phases of Picasso: left, portrait of Gertrude Stein in the "Blue" period; centre, the Negro influence, strength and vitality, jazz in paint; right, the Cubist

reproduced the teacher's exact script, almost photographing it, even to the twirl on a figure "2" or the height of a dot over an "i." He passed the entrance exam into the Madrid Fine Arts Academy in hours while other pupils took days, but would not attend classes, saying he had nothing to learn from its teachers. His relations, who had clubbed together to send him, stopped their allowance, and he lived practically penniless in the artist's traditional attic.

In Paris, where in 1900 everyone who had any claims to be an artist had to go, he fared no better, and at times had to keep his fire going with his own sketches. Searching, always searching, for the means to express himself (although he has denied this in his most famous saying: "I find, I do not seek"), the young man began painting in the vivid style of Henri Toulouse-Lautrec, using not only his designs and colours, but subject matter—circus and café life —as well.

Sorrow In Blue . . .

By the time he was twenty he had found the first of his own styles, and was painting in what is known as his Blue Period. Coloured mostly blue these pictures were sad and lyrical, of beggars, bowed workers, people who distilled sorrow. He was still poor and slept during the day in the bed of a friend who was out at work. At night he painted. Four years later, just when Paris was beginning to acclaim his blue pictures, he put down his tubes of blue pigment and picked up instead pink and rose-coloured oils to express a lightening of his own mood.

He was becoming better known. He had enough to eat. And his model, Fernande Olivier, had moved in with him. She has described how he looked then: "Small, black, stubby, unquiet, disquieting, with sombre, deep, piercing, strange, almost *fixed* eyes. Awkward gestures, feminine hands, ill-dressed, ill-cared-for. A thick, black forelock divided the intelligent protuberant forehead. Half-Bohemian, half-workman in his dress; his over-long hair swept the collar of a tired coat."

Life was gay, life was fun. When you came home drunk it was amusing to fire off your Browning pistol to wake the neighbours and then smoke some hashish. Next day, after your head stopped aching, it was wonderful to go down to the circus and paint the clowns and acrobats off duty. All in pink.

. . . And Negroid Vitality

But everything palls, and Picasso was restless. This was the moment when the young man saw a piece of Negro sculpture for the first time. He immediately stopped painting the graceful harlequins of the circus and began instead to paint in a determinedly ugly Negroid manner, which contained much of the strength and vitality of African culture. It was jazz in paint, and the artistic world threw up its hands in horror; Picasso ignored them, and within a year many other artists had started painting this way, too. But Picasso was already moving on.

It was in Spain, where he went home in 1909 for a visit, that he painted some pictures of rooftops, bearing in mind a remark of Paul Cézanne, the father of modern painting, to the effect that nature must be looked at in terms of cubes, cones and cylinders. Led by Cézanne, painters had been emphasizing these qualities in landscapes since just before Picasso was born, but nobody had ever taken it to its logical conclusion—painting nature as if it *were* cubes, cones and cylinders. This is what Picasso did.

The movement which he led and helped to found became known as "Cubism." Although it is forty years since the first cubist pictures were painted, they still leave many people with an uncomprehending frown on their faces. Some, like Sir Alfred Munnings, make rude remarks. Picasso has an answer: "I cannot read English, but I do not conclude that all English books are nonsense."

He rarely attempts to make people see what he is getting at, preferring to let his pictures speak for themselves. In time, he is confident, they will become less difficult to understand. "When I paint a picture," he says, "I am not concerned with the fact that two people may be represented in it. Those two people once existed for me, but they exist no longer. My vision of them gave me an initial emotion, then little by little their presence got blurred; they became for me a fiction and then disappeared altogether, or rather they were transformed into all kinds of problems, so that they became for me no longer two people but forms and colours — forms and colours which nevertheless resume an experience of two people, and preserve the vibration of their life."

Farther and farther he pushed into the uncharted waters of cubism, until he met a young ballet dancer called Olga Koklova. They fell in love, and were married in 1918.

If your husband is an artist, you expect to have your picture painted, and it was partly this natural desire on the part of his bride which prompted Picasso to paint once more in a "realistic" manner. He had always "kept his hand in" by drawing his friends, but now half his output was more or less recognizable.

Faces That Startled

He made a new discovery: if a face is painted from several angles at once, giving each feature its most expressive angle, a strong and startling appearance is achieved. Thus it was that he began to paint noses from the side, nostrils from below, eyes full and staring and placed in the composite head wherever they would have the greatest effect.

The world was drifting now towards a new cataclysm. Mussolini and Hitler had forced their way to power. Picasso grew desperate and his work took on a hysterical aspect. The genius—and by now there were few who denied that he was that, although some regretted th course it had taken—is always more sensitive than other men. In Picasso it showed in his personal life as well as in his work. He became obsessed with time, and began carrying three watches. Fearful of getting up late, he would leave extravagant notes for his secretary, Jaime Sabartés, to wake him. Sample:

It is now two o'clock of the morning of the 9th day of March of the year MCMXXXVI. Sabartés: You who know personally each and every hour ask Eight Thirty to leap into my bed and awaken me.

New Phase Followed Divorce

The Picassos were not a happy couple and, in 1936, his wife sued for divorce. Picasso had fallen ill and given up painting the year before.

It was the Spanish civil war which jerked him out of his despondency. Although he had been living in France since the early years of the century, he had kept his Spanish nationality, and remains a Spaniard to this day. When Franco and his Fascists began their fight against the Republican Government, Picasso did all he could to help the Republicans.

When the undefended town of Guernica was bombed in April, 1937, his anger rose to white heat. The Spanish Government had asked him to design a mural for their pavilion at the Paris Exhibition. At the height of his powers as a painter and the pitch of his anger against the Fascists, Picasso forged a scene which some critics claim to be the most powerful that has ever been painted. In stark black and grey, "Guernica," symbol of the horror of the modern world, is shown as a cellar lit by a single naked bulb. The scene is one of carnage, with suffering men and beasts writhing in an agony of destruction. A mother shrieks for her dead child. A woman tries to flee but cannot. A wounded horse threshes in pain and tramples a man under its feet. The lustful bull of destruction turns in the background, ready to strike again. Through the window, Truth plunges her lamp, but it is dimmed by the

eriod, Nature seen as cones and cylinders

The Master with one of his works: a technique he pioneered—painting objects from several angles at once

electric glare of the death machine.

But this propaganda, great as it was, did not help to stop what happened in Guernica spreading throughout the world. When France fell, Picasso was in Paris. Nazi troops were forbidden to visit him, but when they did, the little man, greying now, gave them a memento to take away: a postcard of one of his paintings: "Guernica." One of them asked: "Did you do this?" Picasso shook his head, and replied: "No. You did."

Searching for an answer to the troubles of our time, Picasso joined the French Communist Party after the Liberation in 1944, but the Soviet Government still attacks his work as "decadent." When asked about this, he shakes his head and says: "Politics are politics, painting is painting," which is also not an attitude popular in the U.S.S.R.

His Baby, Paloma

For the Communists he is a welcome source of funds and also a principal supporter of their peace congresses. His drawing of a dove is the official emblem of the Peace Congress, and he was so pleased at its adoption that he called his new-born baby Paloma, which is Spanish for dove. Paloma's delicate health is the reason why we in Britain shall not be seeing a big Picasso show this year. She has to stay in the warm South of France, and her father does not want to leave her and go to Paris for the selection of material. So he will stay in his modest little house overlooking the cultivated Riviera coast.

He has a mania for collecting tiny objects with some associations for him, and on the mantelpiece of his dining-room there is a strange bronze sculpture which acts as a receptacle for souvenirs. Like a surrealist Christmas tree, it contains a champagne cork, a pompon, a little doll, a dunce's cap, banknotes out of circulation, and a hundred other bits and pieces with memories for him. From the beach he brings pieces of glass, pebbles, sometimes even a jawbone. He has tie he wore when a child, old matchboxes, castanets. He cannot throw anything away.

This love of preservation contrasts with his continual change of style in painting and his constant attempts at new forms of expression. Besides painting, sculpture and pottery, he has made an impression in architecture and films. London recently heard a performance of a play called *Desire Caught by the Tail*, with characters named Big Foot, Jam Tart and Skinny Anguish. This year he is going to try monumental sculpture for the first time.

Whatever he does, he will be able to sell it at fantastic prices. So-called sculptures like "Piece of Wood on a Matchbox," which is no more than a piece of wood lying haphazardly against a matchbox, were solemnly reproduced in an expensive (£2 5s.) art book published last year in England, France and America. In another, a piece of torn-up paper was photographed and displayed.

Sometimes he is playful with the dealers who surround him like oil prospectors before a gusher. One night in the Café de Flore, on the left bank of Paris, he was cornered by three of them. Manipulating a pencil on a packet of cigarettes under the table, he suddenly confronted them with what he declared was "the latest Picasso," a few lines on the inside of the packet. When he got up to go he left it on the table, and, as soon as he reached the door, the three men made a grab for the box. Picasso turned round, sauntered back to the table and picked it up. "Sorry, I forgot my cigarettes," he said, and put it in his pocket.

But the stupidity of a few people with more money than sense does not make his serious work any the less important. While he publicly shrugs his shoulders at such critics as Evelyn Waugh, who wrote to *The Times* that his work, like ". . . Nazi oratory . . . aims at a mesmeric trick," and the woman who made a scene when his paintings were on show at the Victoria and Albert Museum, saying that they were the product of "a diseased mind," privately he is a little upset.

He bitterly told his friend, the authoress Gertrude Stein: "They say I can draw better than Raphael and they are right, perhaps I do draw better. But if I draw as well as Raphael I have at least the right to choose my way." Choose it he will, going forward, always finding something new. And many in the world of art will follow behind the little man in a beret. THE END

Map of Danzig harbour showing position of Swedish dock. Dotted line (right) indicates Philpot's route from wood at Westerplatte to the *Aralizz*

STOLEN JOURNEY

Continued from page 14

path. About three hundred paces inside the wood I left the path, and, walking through the rough bush between the trees, selected an isolated spot and sat down. I felt quite warm, so I spread out my greatcoat and lay on my back. It was still, there; quiet and pleasant. Here were no watching eyes, no continual presence of the enemy. I shut my eyes and rested.

When I opened them I saw the tracery of branches against the sky and the sturdiness of the trunks holding them. I turned my head and the autumn leaves which formed my couch rustled. This dell was heaven. Thrusting aside the temptation to give up the dock hazard altogether, I got ready. I ate some "dog-food," drank a little water. I thought about my clothes. I could not climb on to a ship wearing an Anthony Eden or a greatcoat. It was an unpleasant decision, but I decided I would have to leave them in the wood.

I folded my greatcoat up, very neatly, kicked a trench in the leaves and surface soil and covered it over. The hat had to go next. I put it carefully in my attaché case, and buried that also. Jon's Norwegian papers I kept in my wallet. The whole lot could be flung away in a second if things got hot. In another pocket was the very bogus Swedish sailor's pass. This I would use if necessary in the docks. But I would want a pretty dumb sentry for the Swedish sailor story to succeed. I placed my compass in a safe pocket, also my money (I still had over 100 Reichsmarks), and some food tablets I had.

I Pass A P.o.w. Camp

I left the wood. Time was pressing, and I saw no point in foot-slogging unnecessarily. A No. 4 tram stood at Heubude and I got on. Before long we approached my crossroads, with the signpost showing that Weichselmunde was five kilometres away. Here I got out, and, after walking a while, I saw a familiar sight beside the road—a p.o.w. camp complete with German sentry standing guard at the gate. We gave one another the most casual of glances and I passed on.

Now there were signs that I was approaching close to dockland, presumably the eastern end of my Swedish dock. I came to the houses of Weichselmunde, took a quick look at my map of Danzig, and got my bearings. As I walked into the main street I glanced down towards the end of it and, sure enough, only a few hundred yards away was the main entrance to my Swedish dock which I had seen the night before. There was an efficient-looking gate in a tall wire fence, and two sentries guarding it. This was the gate my map warned me to avoid.

I turned my back and took the first street from this main road and the prying eyes of German soldiers. I came to a path which now and then skirted the waterside and close to various little docks along which ships were moored. Then it would twist and turn again and I would be making my way between walls screening the backyards of slummy houses. On one such stretch I started to overtake a German naval officer. He began to speak, loudly, to no one in particular, and to sway from one side to another.

This would not do at all. I wanted no drunken friends. I wanted no arm around my shoulder and an alcoholic voice asking loudly why I had that patch in my jacket, or what ship I came from—the answers to be repeated over and over again for dulled ears. Nor did I want a drunken enemy—someone, who with the insight peculiar to drunken men, might be led in a moment to the truth that I was phoney. I hung back whenever, in his zigzag wandering, he stopped to hiccough and argue some point with unseen companions. At last the officer rolled up a sidepath, and, to my relief, disappeared with some belching noises and loud mutterings.

Across The Water Lay Freedom

The buildings and houses on either side of the road seemed strung out in endless succession, and I was just beginning to doubt my topography when they fell away and I came to the outskirts of a wood. This I had expected and it lay on the map on a great hook of a peninsula called Westerplatte on the east bank of the Vistula at its mouth. It looked the sort of thick pine wood which, in such a part of the world, might well contain flak batteries or even anti-ship guns, and into which entry would be strictly forbidden. There was nobody about, so I crossed a small, sunken railway line and plunged into the thick rows of evergreens. I pushed my way through them and suddenly came to a beach flanking the open sea. I looked out across the Baltic. There was no land between me and my neutral country, Sweden.

Refreshed by the sea breeze, and heartened by the lap of the waves, I went back into a hidden spot in the wood and sat down on a bed of pine needles. It was about 5 p.m. I was not due out of the wood till 6 p.m. I prepared myself. I got out my supply of safety pins and pinned my papers, compass, money, and other belongings safely into my pockets. I did not want anything to rattle or drop with a plop into water and arouse a sentry when I crawled along the dock edge. From time to time I glanced at my watch. Now it was twenty minutes to six. I played with a few twigs, breaking them in half, fiddling with them and trying to pretend that I wasn't nervous. Forty-eight hours ago to the minute I had been lying in the tunnel at a place a million leagues away called Sagan. Twenty-four hours ago I had been on my first dock reconnaissance, not far from here. Twenty-four hours hence? . . .

But it didn't do to think about the future.

As the Rolex hands crawled up to 6 p.m. I got up and brushed the pine needles off my jacket and Fleet Air Arm trousers. It was dark now. I set out back towards Weichselmunde. I arrived back there where the ferry from Neufahrwasser had landed me about twenty-four hours previously. This was old ground. The roadway along which most people walked turned away east into the little town. Ahead lay the path which I knew led straight to the fence of my Swedish dock. Few people would use it in the normal course of events. I walked along it, ready for anything.

As each patch of darkness resolved into nothing more dangerous than inanimate objects I breathed again, and tensed up for the next. Some light now came from the arc lamps on the Swedish dock. There was a tall box, like a sentry box or a ticket collector's shelter. It stood just above the round-the-harbour boat's landing stage. I could not tell if it was occupied or not. I had to see. I passed near to it and looked closer at it. It was quite empty. I descended the few feet to the *Hafenrundfahrt* landing stage. I got down on to it, and stood still, turning slowly round to see if I was observed. The fence of the dock loomed up against the sky on the land side. There was no burly figure of a sentry there with rifle slung on shoulder.

My character parts were all at an end. I was a common or garden escaper now. I had "gone furtive," like a regular thief in the night. I bent down and scrambled along the horizontal fenders with which the dock front was faced, and kept above the water but below the level of the surface of the dock. In seconds I reached the fence where it jutted out. It was child's play. I swung out on the projection of it over the water. It took my weight. I went slowly in order to avoid catching on the barbed wire.

From The Inside Looking Out

Cautiously I raised my head above the lip of the dock, very slowly. There was open flat dock space in front of me and no sentries close at hand. I ran my eyes along the tall fence on the left, and there, sure enough, was the post with sentries carrying torches beside the gate at the entrance—but now I was seeing it from the inside, from the dock itself.

The *Aralizz* was there all right, in the same position as in the morning when my boat had brought me near it. She was being loaded with coal from railway trucks, the dock arc lamps were shining down on the scene, and a strong searchlight followed each movement of the coal grab. The *Aralizz's* stern and sides rose sheer and smooth above the dock. There was a gangway in the down position and I would dearly have liked to have walked up it. But the light shone brightly here, and there was a sentry dead

opposite the dock end of the ship's gangway. He paced up and down in a perfectly open flat space which could offer me no concealment. His sole job was to guard the gangway.

I counted the length of his beat. It was thirteen paces, about turn, and thirteen paces back. There was not the slightest prospect of slipping past him. The only possible objective was one of those cables attached to the stern. I began to work my way along the wooden fenders towards it. There were perhaps 150 feet or so to go.

On the whole I felt cheered. Cable it would have to be—that was the gamble. But the start was auspicious. I had not had to swim round the fence, the dock wall was easy going, and no sentry would see me unless he came right to the edge of the dock and looked down.

So far so good. I felt secure from hostile eyes for the time being. Yet what was that sound? The swish-swish of a substantial vessel being propelled through the water below me. In a fraction of a second I turned my head as I clung spider-like to the dockside. From out of the darkness I could see the lights of the round-the-harbour boat approaching—coming, of course, right into the landing stage upon which I had stood only a minute or two before, congratulating myself on the absence of all other people. How ridiculous to forget my own boat, as it were.

I thought of dropping quickly into the Vistula and treading water quietly with my face turned away, but even as I hesitated my hands felt behind the horizontal fenders on which I clambered. There was a space. Was it big enough? There was no time to find out; the boat was only a few lengths away now. I squeezed swiftly behind the fenders and found there was just sufficient space between them and the solid masonry of the dock for me to fit in. As I crouched there, with hardly room to move an inch, a strong light played all along the dock face, throwing a glare between the fenders and into my hiding place. I lay quiet. There was a babel of voices as passengers got off. After minutes there was the clang-clang of the engine-room telegraph and I heard the boat move off.

The Enemy Closes In

I emerged from behind the fenders and resumed my spider crawl. Progress was quite good, and now and again I raised my head to survey the flat surface of the dock, but no sentry came close. The stern of the *Aralizz* was looking quite near now. Abruptly, as the curve of the dock straightened out, the wooden fenders came to an end. I arrived at a vertical metal ladder let into the wall. Beyond that, towards my ship, was a vertical wall of masonry with no handholds or footholds in it, and no wooden fenders superimposed on it.

At that moment, as I clung on to the ladder, I heard a slight movement and, looking behind me over the water, I saw that a light which I had previously thought was shining from the opposite bank a mile or so away was, in reality, mounted in a small boat which was only about a hundred feet distant. Moreover, the boat was moving steadily towards me, making, apparently, for the ladder. There wasn't time to get back among the fenders. I could go into the water or I could go up on to the surface of the dock.

As I got a few feet up the ladder and looked on to the dock I saw a sentry with a torch advancing towards me from the main Swedish dock gateway in the wire fence. You could always tell whether a sentry was searching for someone, or not. If he was just walking at random the torch flashed aimlessly; if he was searching, the beam was directed here and there in a business-like manner. This sentry was having a search, and he was walking briskly towards the top of my ladder where I clung.

I got up on top of the dock on hands and knees and looked desperately round for cover. I saw two low wooden boxes containing sand for putting out incendiary bombs. I crawled quickly to one side of the nearest box. It was a complete gamble as to which side the sentry would come. As luck would have it he came by the far side from me, and I crawled around the box, keeping it between us. I froze. The dock sentry was ten or twelve feet away, standing talking to the man in the little boat at the ladder below.

"I froze. The sentry flashed his torch at me." Philpot and son Nicholas play "escape"

"A last heave and I was on the deck." Posed picture of Philpot taken on the *Aralizz*

Conversation went on for some time. I heard the words *"weg gelaufen"* ("run away"). The palaver ended. The sentry, whom I could watch this time, returned, flashing his torch about, although it was light enough to see quite well without it. This time I could study him properly and decide which side of my sandbox he was coming. We did our round-the-mulberry-bush act again. He walked, I crawled, and the sandbox lay between, separating us by perhaps four feet. He went off back to the gate. I lay draped like a snake around my sandbox—sweating.

The little boat had disappeared. But for all I knew it might still be at the bottom of the ladder. The bollards fixed in the dock and which held the land end of the two cables attaching the stern of the *Aralizz* to the dock were about thirty feet away. The space between me and them was open. I crawled out from the security of the sandbox, keeping my head down and trying to time my movements to take place when the gangway sentry had his back to me.

From time to time I looked up as I drew myself over the dock surface. On one of these occasions, when I was about half way across the space which I had to cover, I saw to my consternation two guards walking briskly, shoulder to shoulder, past my gangway guard and along the dock, towards me. They were obviously going off duty. I could tell by their springy, care-free walk—not at all the stolid, bored tread of your sentry on the job. They carried torches which they flashed about at random. They were about eighty feet away and heading straight for me.

My sandbox was so far behind me that it might have been in another world for all the use

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it was as a shelter. The ladder was also too far; so were the bollards. There was only one thing to do. I did it. I lay dead still, flattened on the dock, with my face pressed downwards. I lay by the rail of a railway track along which coal trucks were presumably shunted at times. I waited. This was the end. I wondered whether they would lose their heads and rifle-butt me, or even fire, or whether they would simply lead me off.

I could hear the sentries' footsteps close now . . . and their voices and the swish of their large army greatcoats . . . wait for it . . . now they were almost abreast of me . . . but . . . yes . . . on the other side of the track . . . that would lead them about four feet from where I lay . . . now they were up to me . . . still . . . I must keep still . . . were they pausing . . . no . . . their footsteps never faltered . . . now . . . and—what incredible luck—they were past me. After an age I lifted my face. They had disappeared.

There were still fifteen feet between me and the bollards. This was no time to look about and to be cautious. Events moved too quickly. I crawled swiftly to the bollards and, seizing one of the *Aralizz's* two cables, swung myself out on it. The cable hung in a fairly deep loop, and clinging to this like a monkey, I was now in a pool of shadow, because I was well below the lip of the dock.

Hanging on to the cable, I looked up at the large, rounded stern of the *Aralizz*. The points of attachment of the two cables at the ship were in shadow. I chose one of the two, and took a last look at the ship before I started up the cable. The vessel looked as huge as the *Queen Mary* and the cable, as far as I could follow it with my eye, seemed practically vertical. There was one patch, too, where the dock arc lamps caught it nicely. This was just about at the level of gaze of the sentries at the gate.

Up The Wrong Cable

I started my climb. I made good progress. Then it got steeper. Now at last I was through the lighted bit and close to the ship. At last I was there, but what was this? The cable met the rounded stern of the ship and then, forced tight against the plate so that I could no longer get my hands round it, disappeared round the far side.

Instantly I knew what I had done. In spite of my reconnaissances I had chosen the wrong cable. There was no method by which I could get to the *Aralizz's* deck, only four or five feet above me now. So very close. Nor could I get into the ship through a porthole. They were too small. In stupid desperation I rapped my knuckles against the glass of one. Nothing happened, nor was there any light inside.

I came down the cable. I very much doubted if I would have the strength to get up the other, which was steeper, or the luck still not to be seen. It appeared highly doubtful that a dark figure like some enormous rat, could climb again up a cable to the ship without being seen. Nor could I rest. To go on the dock again would be crazy. All I could do was to hang on to the loop of my cable like a sloth, gasping for breath and trying not to let go with my feet.

I transferred to the correct cable. I struggled up it . . . now I was in the light patch . . . no disturbance from the sentries . . . the stern was closer but my arms were aching badly . . . I paused . . . that was worse than ever, merely prolonged it . . . on for a few more feet . . . at last I was into the shadow . . . but the cable was nearly vertical now . . . or seemed to be . . . it was a question of inches at a time . . . at last . . . here's where the cable's fixed to the ship . . . it went through the usual hole in the ship's plating and was coiled round bollards on deck . . . but I was underneath the wire. . . . What should I do? . . . Had to get on top, yet not so that I immediately lost balance and rolled over the other side . . . my muscles could not stand such a sudden gyration . . . then could I stand on the cable and, leaning on the ship's plating, reach for the deck rail? . . . No . . . impossible . . . I would have to try to get through the cable hole in the plating. . . . With a last heave I rolled on top of the cable and, reaching ahead, grasped the iron post with the cable draped round it. . . .

Now my head was through the gap. I squeezed my body through—and drew up my legs, quickly. On deck I crawled swiftly to the non-dock side, in case the German in the crane would see me. There was no one about on the ship. I lay flat on the deck, gasping and sweating—and listening . . . listening . . . for shouting, for shots, for all the noises of a search. There were none. The crane clanked and rattled; the coal poured into the ship.

Somewhere To Hide

I had got on to my neutral ship, unaided, and without being seen by the Germans. I felt almost drunk with the sheer pleasure of achievement. Then slowly I came to realize that my trip was *not* over. The ship was certain to be searched by the Germans before sailing. I had to find somewhere to hide. I studied the stern. Nothing here but the upperworks and a solidly locked door leading to the crew's quarters. I had always meant to take instruction from p.o.w.s in lock-picking, but had never got round to it. A pity. I would have to try amidships.

I crawled along the deck, on the non-dock side, keeping well below the coaming of the hatch. I reached the cabins amidships. The ship was deserted, it seemed. Here, however, a door was open. I went inside. There was a warm corridor, and opening off it, a little lighted galley which I entered. I could smell a chocolaty smell and soon found a large saucepan with a delicious cocoa mixture in it, keeping warm on a stove. I helped myself repeatedly to the contents, using the large ladle as a cup. It was very refreshing.

I Knock On The Door

I could still think of nowhere to hide, and when I came out of the galley I saw a cabin with the door ajar and a light on inside. There were no voices, so presumably a Swede was in there alone. I walked to the door, knocked, and entered. A stocky man, perhaps in his middle fifties, got up from his chair by a table. He wore a short-cut white jacket and seemed to be a sort of steward. He was very surprised.

"Sh-sh——!" I said. "It's all right. I'm an English flier . . . escaped . . . no one knows I'm here." And I repeated it in German.

He understood very well, but seemed unable to speak. His mouth moved and he looked on me very seriously and with considerable alarm. He stammered in understandable English. "N-n-no. . . . N-n-no. . . . I can . . . d-d-do n-n-nothing. . . . You must l-l-leave this s-s-ship."

NEXT WEEK: A desperate interview with the captain. I am ordered off the ship

Crack shots' classic

by RONALD W. CLARK

The world's deadliest marksmen shoot at Bisley next week, but a novice can hire a rifle—and win

Bisley fashions have changed during Whiteing's twenty years—and each season there are more women

NEXT MONDAY Captain I. H. Whiteing, a white-haired perky little ex-officer of seventy-four, will rise at dawn, stalk with critical eye between the hundreds of tents, huts and marquees pitched on a green oasis in the Surrey heaths near Aldershot, will take an eight-mile walk past many hundred rifle and revolver targets, and will ask pertinent questions of some three score workers for whom the Great Day has arrived. Soon afterwards he will hear the crackle of rifle fire coming from the Bisley butts and will know that the Eighty-first Annual Meeting of the National Rifle Association — the twentieth successive one in which he will have played a vital part—has opened according to plan.

Captain Whiteing, quartermaster at the Bisley headquarters of the Association since 1930, knows more about this great annual festival of firing than most men still living. Cockneys and Highlanders and Colonials, schoolboys and veterans of more than eighty years and a score of campaigns, find a common magnet in this collection of gaily painted clubhouses and temporary tents and the rolling acres of the rifle ranges beyond them; and men travel halfway across the world to compete in such competitions as those for the King's Prize.

When Queen Victoria Fired

When Whiteing retired from the Army in 1930 and came to live with his wife and sons in the pleasant house on the N.R.A. ground, Bisley —like Wimbledon, Ascot, Henley and Lord's—had already become not only a name but a symbol. The first meeting was opened not at Bisley at all but on Wimbledon Common in 1860, when Queen Victoria stood under a gaily coloured canopy, pulled a silk cord, and with it fired a shot from a specially laid rifle.

The annual event, held by the newly formed N.R.A., quickly grew into a fashionable social event. Spiers and Pond, the caterers, on two days in 1869 served more than 25,000 people with magnificent menus into which went such items as 480 lobsters, 5 cwt. of salmon, 900 head of poultry, 1,000 fruit pies, 760 gallons of claret cup, and huge quantities of other meat and drink. In 1890, when the increasing range of rifles made Wimbledon no longer a possible site for the meeting, its scene was moved to Bisley, a sandy stretch of heath four miles from the Surrey town of Woking.

Thenceforward, neither Bisley nor the N.R.A. ever looked back; today there are 1,852 life members and 886 annual members, while 794 rifle clubs with many thousands of members are affiliated to the national association. Last year a total of 48,000 entry tickets was issued—many riflemen entering, of course, for more than one event.

"And this year," Whiteing says, "we've got the biggest batch of Dominion and Colonial entries that I can ever remember. We've had them from West Africa, Kenya, the West Indies, the Sudan, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Nyasaland, Singapore and Southern Rhodesia—some of them team entries and some of them from marksmen who will be firing as individuals." They are, however, only a small percentage of the 2,000-odd people who will sleep in the N.R.A. "compound" this month.

"We have eighty-six huts that were moved bodily from Wimbledon Common. They are still as good as new, even though they've been here for sixty years. That only deals with part of the problem, however. In addition, I've got about 1,000 tents and marquees, and most of those go up for the meeting."

It is only recently that the rule against women competitors sleeping on the N.R.A. ground has been relaxed—even though as long ago as 1930 a woman, Driver M. E. Foster, reached the finals of the coveted King's Prize competition and then won it. "After this," one Association member is reported to have said, "anything can happen. I'm going home to have a baby."

For the last twenty years, however, more and more women have been coming to Bisley. The Amazons, a challenge trophy presented by Commodore the Duke of Montrose, is shot for by women alone—at 300 yards and 600 yards—and this year's meet is expected to see many entries from the three women's services.

Day And Night Bedding Store

Catering for the thousands at Bisley is largely the work of the various rifle associations which rent clubs there. "What I *do* have to handle, though," says Captain Whiteing, "is all the bedding; and as arrivals come in at any hour of the day or night I have to keep a bedding store here open twenty-four hours a day when the meeting's on."

There are at present about 4,500,000 rounds of ammunition "in stock," though not on the premises. Most of it was bought from the Government after the war and is drawn at the rate of about 1,000,000 rounds a year. Which is one of the reasons why the cost of ammunition is now less than it was before the war—about £4 per 1,000 rounds, compared with £5 per 1,000.

Some 2,000 rifles are also kept in stock, and many are hired out at a few shillings a day. Captain Whiteing has the best story of what can happen to one of them.

"It was a few years before the war," he says, "and a young fellow came down during the meeting from one of the universities. He hadn't got his own gun, so he hired one for a bob or so. Then he took first prize in the first shoot he went in for. He hadn't done much rifle work and he'd only dropped in almost casually, but on my advice he wired home and told his people he'd be staying. He was in such good form that he got into the final stage of the King's Prize—all with a few-bob-a-day rifle!"

Competition in this event, with

From a painting by A. R. Thompson, R.A.

Another New Power Station

ON THE WEST BANK of the River Trent, near Newark, stands one of Britain's finest power stations. Staythorpe—the fourth great post-war power plant to be brought into operation by British Electricity — is an engineering triumph of which the nation can be proud.

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What it Means to You

Staythorpe is only one of 38 power stations being built by British Electricity. In addition, 43 existing stations are being extended to give increased output. It is part of the plan to provide Britain's factories and workshops, farms and homes with the abundant power they urgently need.

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its guinea entrance fee and £850 in prize money, is keener than for any other. When it was started as the Queen's Prize in 1860 there were only 299 competitors, but last year the figure had reached 1,211 and it may be even higher this year.

In the first stage, competitors fire seven shots at 200 yards, 500 yards and 600 yards. The 300 with the best scores then enter for the second stage in which ten shots are fired at 300 yards, 500 yards and 600 yards. The 100 competitors with the best scorecards at this stage—"the King's Hundred"—then fire it out in the final stage in which fifteen shots are fired at 900 yards and 1,000 yards.

Old Man Who Tries Hard

This event, even if the most famous, is only one from among 130 individual and nearly sixty team events shot off during the Bisley fortnight. There are others for schoolboys—the best known being that for the Ashburton Shield—for Service personnel, and for "all-comers." There are "running deer" competitions (one target was copied from a Landseer sketch), "running man" competitions, snap shooting and sniping events, and many revolver events.

"Many hundreds of those who shoot are regulars, coming back year after year," says Captain Whiteing. "There's one old fellow who was coming down here regularly when I arrived twenty years ago; he still is. He's eighty-seven and looks sixty, goes on shooting until he gets a really bad score, then realizes that he's off-colour and packs up for the rest of the meeting."

Although "the Bisley fashion," the queer galaxy of hats which one sees, technically devised to shade the eyes but also showing ingenuity and artistry, is allowed and even admired, rules as to uniform on the ranges are strict, and there is the most stringent ban on anyone wearing a combination of uniform and civvies, however comfortable this may be. The regulations govern not only uniform but also such details as the amount of padding which may be worn—pieces not bigger than eight inches by eight inches, and not more than half an inch thick, on the shoulder, the elbows and the upper arm.

Hundred Targets A Day

The range superintendent, Mr. Hill, has a permanent staff of four to deal with the business of range management and target stocking and repair that comes to its peak this month. "There are 288 different target spaces on the ranges," he says. "To keep them all supplied I have to keep a stock of about 2,000 targets in good condition—sometimes we get through 100 a day and we can't afford to run out."

Just how long a target lasts depends, of course, on how many shots are fired into it, but when it is no longer serviceable the target frame is taken down, fresh canvas stretched over it—"what was once 5d. a yard now costs 2s. 6d." says Hill—and then brown and white paper is stretched over this. On the white paper the target rings are then "scribed" with a special "scribing ring."

"Empties" Are Salvaged

Salvage of the metal shot into the butts day after day is another of Hill's jobs. "About fifteen tons of it a year," he says, "disposed of to the nearest works." Salvage of spent cartridge cases could be even more profitable with brass at £84 a ton, but most club members who shoot at Bisley collect the "empties" for resale by their local clubs.

There are 300 separate cash prizes in the competition for the King's Prize alone; there are fifty or more cash prizes in dozens of the other events, and the total of £7,529 8s. which was paid out as prize money at last year's Bisley meeting comprised thousands of small payments, the majority for only a few shillings or pounds. And for each one of them a cheque had to be made out and a receipt given.

"For the whole of the meeting," says W. E. R. Westmoreland, the N.R.A.'s chief accountant, "I have two men here writing out prize money cheques all day long, and doing nothing else. The work really starts in April when the first of the hundreds of entry forms comes in. Last year, entrance fees totalled £15,233, most of it in small sums, and receipts had to go out to everyone. When the meeting opens, Barclay's and the G.P.O. do so too; I have four additional cashiers handling money across the counter all day long, and there are another eight men at ticket-boxes on the ranges selling tickets for the 'unlimited' events."

Which helps to explain why a special body of armed Military Police mount guard on the Bisley strongroom during the meeting.

Prize Money Is Decreasing

This classic event of the shooting world is changing, slowly but quite perceptibly. Perhaps one of the most obvious differences between the ranges this month and those ten or twenty years ago will be the vastly increased number of light blue uniforms. The R.A.F. is going in for shooting in a big way. Another difference is the decrease in the prize money. This may be no bad thing, but it is certain that the days when patrons could give impressive gifts or trophies are quickly passing.

The July fortnight, however, is merely the annual climax of an all-year-round sport, and there are few weekdays and very few weekends at Bisley when you cannot smell the unmistakable smell of rifle oil and cartridge cases, watch the marksmen, prone on the ground, carefully eyeing the windsocks, and hear the sharp slap of sound as a bullet (which you *can* see if you stand behind the firer) flies towards the target. THE END

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JOHN BULL—JULY 22

A TOWN LIKE ALICE

by NEVIL SHUTE

ILLUSTRATED BY MACKINLAY

Part 8: THE NEW TOWN IS BORN. . . . So far, it had been a vision. Now, with Joe's help, it would rise

THE MEMORY OF A JAP atrocity remained in Jean Paget's memory long after she herself was safe and living in peacetime London again. With other women and children she had been marched about Malaya by the Japs, and had met Joe Harman, an Australian p.o.w. Harman had stolen food for the women, but one theft, involving loss of face for the Jap commandant, had been traced, and he had been publicly beaten and crucified.

Jean Paget was a shorthand-typist, living alone, when I met her, and I had good news. She had been left £53,000 by her uncle, and I, as family solicitor, was appointed trustee.

Jean went back to Malaya to build a well for villagers who had helped her during the war, and there heard the fantastic news that Harman was not dead. He had recovered.

She went to Australia to find him. And, simultaneously, Joe Harman was travelling to London to find her. By the time this mix-up had sorted itself out and he was home again, Jean had had enough experience of the Australian outback to see that its primitive conditions presented her with a challenge—if she were to marry Harman and live there she must improve those conditions. It could be done. It had been done—at the garden city of Alice Springs.

As a first step she wrote to me asking for £5,000 of her capital. She wanted to start a small factory to make leather goods from local skins, and also a milk bar. The work would employ girls, which would keep the young men home, which would lead to marriage, families, shops, a new community.

When Joe returned, they spent a weekend together on Green Island, getting to know each other again. It was an interlude of sunshine and romance. They wouldn't have much time for leisure in the immediate future. They had a town to build—a town like Alice.

* * *

IN the months of November and December that year Jean Paget worked harder than she had ever worked before. Rose Sawyer, the girl she had met in Alice Springs, joined her in Willstown within a fortnight, and Aggie Topp, the

Joe was waiting for her. It gave her a queer feeling of possession to step into his clothes

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workshop supervisor from London, sailed early in November. I got Mr. Pack to send Aggie to see me before she left. She was a gaunt, rather prim woman, but I could see at once that Pack had been quite right; if anyone could make girls work this woman could. I gave her her ticket and a typed sheet of instructions telling her how she would get by air from Sydney to Willstown, and then I talked to her about the job.

She said: "Oh, well, I've been in rough places before. It's only for a year to start with, anyway." And then she said: "I always liked Miss Paget."

JOE HARMAN helped Jean to get the buildings started on the day they arrived in Willstown. They had a meeting with Tim Whelan and his two sons in the carpenter's shop among the coffins. They had already placed orders for two lorry loads of lumber in Cairns. The men stood or sat squatting, ringer fashion, on the floor with papers on the floor before them, planning the layout of the buildings; the workshop with its three-bedroom annexe was to be built first, and after that the ice-cream parlour next to it, leaving room for the expansion of the workshop one way and of the ice-cream parlour the other way. There were no great difficulties of expansion in the built-up area of Willstown.

Jean went to Brisbane a week later, flying to Cairns and flying on the same day down to Brisbane. She stayed there for three days and came back having ordered stores and equipment.

When she returned to Willstown a week later, she found the framework of the workshop already erected; a wooden building goes up very quickly. The matter was a nine days' wonder in Willstown and old men used to stand around wondering at this mid-summer madness of an English girl, a stranger to the Gulf country, who proposed to make shoes there and send them all the way to England to be sold. An aura of disbelief surrounded the whole venture and made her feel very much alone in those first weeks.

She visited Midhurst at a very early stage, one Sunday when no work was going on upon her building. Joe Harman drove in to fetch her in his big utility at dawn one day, and took her back to Midhurst in time for breakfast. As soon as they were out of sight of the town they stopped for five minutes to kiss and talk.

Presently they disentangled and went on. The land was parched and dry with the heat of summer, covered with thin tufts of scorched grass. It was a wooded land, covered thinly with spindly, distorted eucalyptus gum trees averaging twenty to thirty feet in height; these trees were fairly widely spaced so that it was possible for a car or truck driven across country to find a way between them. This was the road, and when the surface of the earth became too deeply pitted and pot-holed with traffic, the cars and trucks would deviate and choose another course. These tracks followed the same general direction, coming together at the fords where creeks, now dry and stony, had to be crossed, and fanning out again on the other side.

Once in the twenty miles she saw half a dozen cattle that stampeded wildly at the noise of the utility as it bounced and rocketed over the uneven ground. She asked Joe what on earth the cattle found to eat; the ground seemed to her to be completely barren. "They get along," he said. "There's plenty here for them to eat, my word. This dry stuff in the tussocks, why, it's just the same as hay." He told her that there was a water-hole a little way from their track. "They never go more than three or four miles from

"All right, folks—you can stop smiling now"

water," he said. "Horses, now—you'll find them grazing up to twenty miles from a drink."

Once she exclaimed at three brown, furry forms bounding away among the trees. "Oh, Joe—kangaroos!"

He corrected her. "Wallabies. We don't get any 'roos up in these parts."

She stared after the flying forms, entranced. "What's the difference between a wallaby and a kangaroo, Joe?"

"A wallaby's smaller," he said. "A big, buck kangaroo, he'll stand up to six feet high, but a wallaby's not more than four. A kangaroo, he's got a face like a deer. A wallaby, he's got a face like a rabbit, or a rat. I got a little wallaby to show you at the homestead."

"A wild one?"

"He's a tame one now. He'll get wild as he grows older; then he'll go off to his own folks." He told her that when they had shot the wallabies to send the sample skins to Cairns for her, they had shot a doe with a joey, and rather than leave the small defenceless creature to die they had taken it home to rear. "I like a wallaby about the place," he said.

They came to Midhurst presently. A fence of two wire strands tacked to the trees, with an occasional post in the wider gaps, crossed their path, with an iron gate; beyond the gate the track became the semblance of a road. She got out of the utility and opened the gate and he drove through. "This is the home paddock," he said. "For horses, mostly." She could see horses standing underneath the trees, lean riding horses, swishing long black tails. "I've got about three square miles fenced off like this around the house."

The road swung round, and she saw Midhurst homestead. It was prettily situated on a low hill above the bend of a creek; this creek was not running, but there were still pools of water held along its length. "Of course, you're seeing it at the worst time of year," he said, and she became aware of his anxiety. "It's a lovely little river in the winter, oh my word. But even in the worst part of the dry, like now, there's always water there."

THE homestead was a biggish building that stood high off the ground on posts, so that you climbed eight feet up a flight of steps to reach the veranda and the one floor of the house. It was built of wood and had the inevitable corrugated iron roof. Four rooms, three bedrooms and one sitting-room were surrounded on all four sides by a veranda twelve feet deep; masses of ferns and greenery of all sorts stood in pots and on stands on this veranda at the outer edge and killed most of the direct rays of the sun. There was a kitchen annexe at one end and a bathroom annexe at the other; the toilet was a little hut over a pit in the paddock, some distance from the house. Most of the life of the building evidently went on in the veranda, and the rooms seemed to be little used; in the veranda was Joe's bed and his mosquito net, and several cane easy chairs, and the dining-room table and chairs. Suspended from the rafters was a large canvas water-bag cooling in the draught, with an enamelled mug hung from it by a string.

Five or six dogs greeted them noisily as the utility came to a standstill before the steps. Joe brushed them aside, but pointed out a large blue and yellow bitch like no dog Jean had ever seen before. "That's Lily," he said fondly. "She had a bonza litter, oh my word."

He took her up into the coolness of the veranda. She turned to him. "Oh, Joe, this is nice!"

"Like it?" Puppies were surging about them, grovelling and licking their hands; odd-shaped yellow and blue puppies. He took the puppies one by one and dropped them into a wire-netting enclosure in one corner. "I let them out this morning before driving in," he said. "They'll be big enough to go down in the yard pretty soon."

"Joe, who fixed up these plants? Did you?"

He shook his head. "Mrs. Spears did that, when she used to live here. I kept them going. The lubras water them, morning and evening." He told her that he had three Abo women, wives of three of his stockriders, who shared the domestic duties of the homestead and cooked for him.

He looked around. "There's the joey somewhere." They found the little wallaby lolloping about on the other side of the veranda; it stood like a little kangaroo about eighteen inches high, and had no fear of them. Jean stooped beside it and it nibbled at her fingers. "How do you feed it, Joe?"

"Bread and milk. It's doing fine on that."

"Don't the puppies hurt it?"

"They chase it now and then, but it can kick all right. A full-grown wallaby can kill a dog. Rip him right up." He paused, watching her caress the little creature, thinking how lovely she was. "It's all in fun," he said. "They get along all right. By and by, when he gets bigger and the dogs are bigger, he'll get angry with them, and then he'll go off into the bush."

A FAT, middle-aged lubra, a black, golliwog of a woman, laid the table and presently appeared with two plates of the inevitable steak with two eggs on the top and a pot of strong tea.

"Who does the cooking?" she asked.

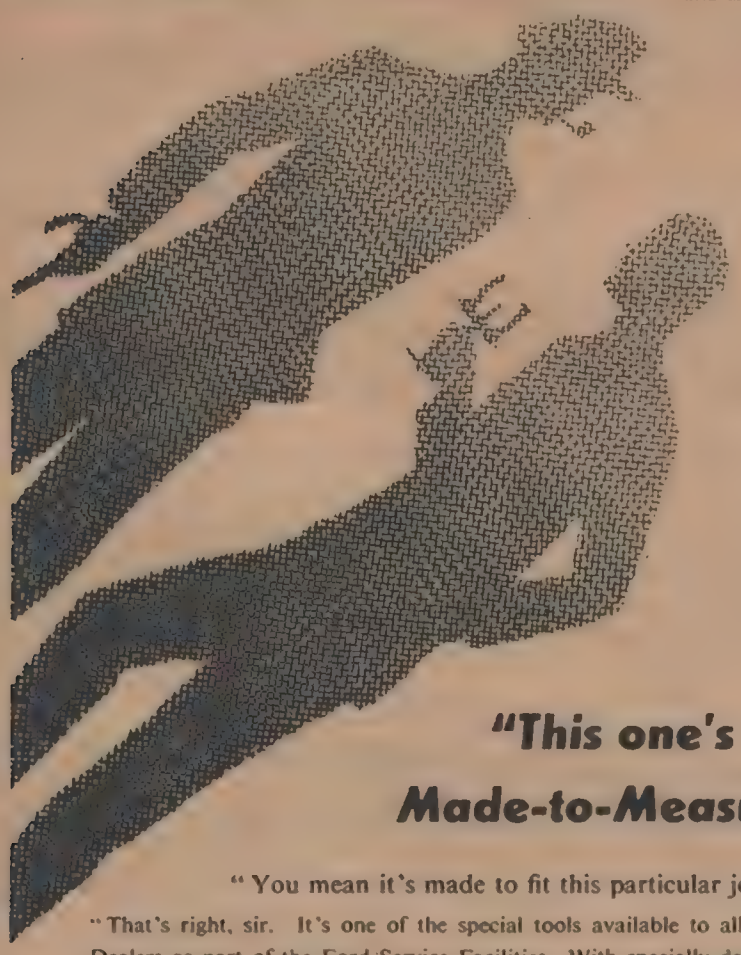
"Palmolive did this," he said. "It's her day. Mary cooks much better, but it's her day off."

"Who are they, Joe?"

"I've got a ringer called Moonshine," he said. "Palmolive's his gin. My boss Abo, he's called Bourneville, he's a bonza boy. Mary's his gin. Mary cooks all right."

He took her out before the heat of the day and showed her the establishment. Although the property covered over a thousand square miles, there were no more buildings round the homestead than she had seen on a four hundred acre farm in England. There were three or four cottages of two rooms at the most, for stockriders; there were two small bunk-houses for

Continued on page 30



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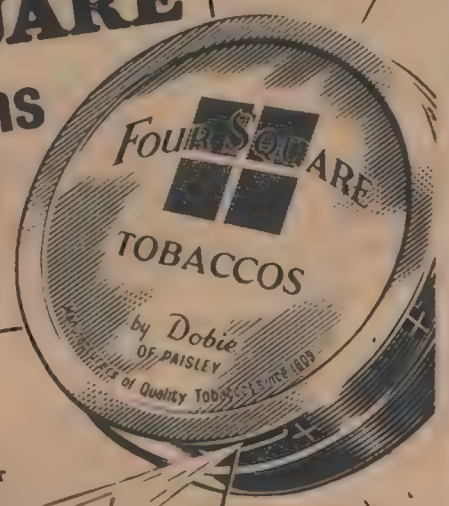

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A TOWN LIKE ALICE

Continued from page 28

unmarried ringers, white and black. There was a shed housing the truck and the utility and a mass of oddments of machinery. There was a stable for about six horses, which was empty, and a saddle-room and a butcher's room. There was a diesel engine that drove an electric generator and pumped water from the creek. That was about all.

Once he said: "Can you ride a horse?"

She shook her head. "I'm afraid not, Joe. Ordinary people don't ride horses much in England."

"Oh my word," he said. "You should be able to do that."

"Could I learn?"

"Too right."

He put his fingers in his mouth like a schoolboy and blew a shrill whistle; a black head came poking out of the window of a single-room cottage. "Bourneville," he called. "Get out and bring in Auntie and Robin, 'n saddle up. I'll be down to help you in a minute."

He turned to her, surveying her cotton frock. "I dunno about your things. Could you get into a pair of my strides, or would you rather not?"

She laughed. "Oh, Joe, they'd go round me twice!"

"I wasn't always as fat as this," he said. "I got a pair I used to wear before the war I can't get into now. It doesn't matter if they don't fit right; we'll only be walking the horses so you'll see what it feels like."

He took her up into the homestead and produced a clean shirt and a faded pair of jodhpurs and a belt for her. She took them from him, laughing, and went into his spare room and put them on, with a pair of his elastic-sided, thin-soled riding boots that were far too big for her. It gave her a queer feeling of possession to be dressed all in his clothes. She walked gingerly down into the yard with the feeling that everything was likely to fall off her, as it had done on another memorable occasion.

He helped her up into the saddle. Once astride the patient, fourteen-year-old Auntie, the feeling of insecurity left her. He adjusted her stirrups and showed her how to set her foot. Once she was fairly settled she felt very safe. She knew little about horses or saddlery at that time, but this saddle was like no saddle she had ever seen in England, even in a picture. It rose up in an arch high behind her seat and high in front of her, so that she was seated as in a hammock. There was a great horn that projected above each of her thighs and another one under each thigh, so that she was virtually clamped into place.

They walked the horses out of the yard and down the track to the creek. As they went he showed her how to hold the reins and how to use her heels. He took her up the creek for about a mile and then by a wide circuit through the bush, winding beneath the trees so far as possible to seek the shade. Once she saw four scurrying black forms vanishing among the trees and he told her that these were wild pigs; and once in a wide stretch of water covered with water lilies there was a violent swirl of water as an alligator dived away from them. She saw several wallabies bounding away before their horses.

They returned to the homestead after an hour or so. Although they had walked the horses all the way Jean was drenched with sweat under the hot sun and she had a raging thirst. In the veranda she drank several mugs of water and then she went into the bathroom and had a shower and changed back into her own cool clothes.

They lunched in the veranda on steak and bread and jam, a repeat of breakfast without the eggs. "Palmolive hasn't got much imagination in the matter of tucker," he said apologetically.

"She's looking very tired," Jean said. "Great black circles under her eyes. Give her the afternoon off, Joe. I'll make tea for you."

He offered her the use of the spare room bed to sleep on after lunch, but they had seen so little of each other in the last fortnight that the time seemed too precious to waste in sleep. "Let's sit out here," she said. "If I should go to sleep, Joe, it'll be just one of those things." So they pulled two of the long cane chairs to the corner of the veranda where there might be a little breeze, and sat together close, so that they could touch hands. "It's not always as hot as this," he said, still anxious for her approval of the place. "Just these two months are the bad ones. By January it'll be beginning to cool off, when the rain gets properly under way."

"It's not too bad," she said. "I remember times when it was quite as hot as this in Malaya."

She led him on to tell her about his work on the station; having seen a little of the terrain that morning she felt she could better appreciate what he told her now. "There's not a lot to do this time of year," he said. "I like to get up to the top end of the station once a fortnight, if I can, in case of duffers. Make a cache or two of tucker up there, too, this time of year, and shoot the worst of the scrub bulls you see around."

"What's a duffer, Joe?"

"Why, cattle duffers—cattle thieves. We've not had much of it this year. Sometimes the drovers coming down to Julia Creek from the Cape stations—they pick up a few as they go through the property and put them with the herd. It means faking the brands, of course, and there's the police at Julia to keep an eye open for fresh branded beasts as they go on the train. They caught a joker at it two years ago and he got six months. We've not had much since then. Poddy dodging, now—well, that's another matter."

"What's poddy dodging, Joe?" She was beginning to grow sleepy, but she wanted to know all she could.

"Why, a poddy's a cleanskin, a calf

THE HUMAN MACHINE

Are You Civilized?

WE like to think we are a civilized people. Maybe we are—but we should be very clear about what civilization means and what it entails.

Neither machines, nor the power that machines give us, nor even social and economic security are in themselves civilization. The right to think freely and the freedom to think differently, the right to choose, the ability to make and appreciate beautiful things, right living and the maintenance of justice equally between man and man—that is what civilization means. It is up to each one of us to defend it.

by ROFFE THOMPSON

OH, JOHNNY!

by TIM

born since the last muster that hasn't been branded. Some of these jokers, even your best friends, they'll come on to your station and round up the poddies and drive them off on to their own land, and then there's nothing to say they're yours. That's poddy dodging, that is. It's a fair cow. Of course, there's always cattle crossing the boundaries because there aren't any fences, so it's a bit of a mix-up generally when you come to muster. But I've been on stations where there weren't hardly any poddies there at all when we came to muster. All the jokers on the other stations had got them."

She said: "But do the poddies just stay on the new land? Don't they want to go back to mother?"

He glanced at her, appreciating the question. "That's right—they would if you let them. They'd go straight back to their own herd on their own land, even if it was fifty miles. But what these jokers do is this. They build a little corral on their land in some place where no one would ever think to look, and they drive your poddies into it. Then they leave them there for four or five days without food or water—don't give them nothing at all. Well, if you do that to a poddy he goes sort of silly and forgets about the herd and mother. All he wants is a drink of water, same as you or I. Then you let him out and let him drink his fill at a waterhole. He's had such a thirst he won't leave that waterhole for months. He forgets all about his own place and just stays in his new home."

Her eyes closed and she slept. When she woke up the sun was lower in the sky and Joe had left her. She got up and sponged her face in the bathroom and saw him outside working on the engine of the truck. She tidied herself up, looked at her watch, and went to investigate the kitchen.

Primitive was the word, she thought. There was a wood-burning hearth which mercifully was out, and a wick-burning oil stove; this was the cooking equipment. There was a small kerosene refrigerator. Masses of cooked meat were stored in a wire gauze meat safe with nearly as many flies inside it as there were outside. The utensils were old-fashioned and dirty and few in number; it was a nightmare of a kitchen. Jean felt that the right course would be to burn it down and start again, and she wondered if this could be done without burning down the house as well. There was little in the store cupboard but soap and staple foods such as flour and salt.

She put on a kettle to boil for tea and looked around for something to cook, other than meat. Eggs were plentiful at Midhurst and she found some stale cheese; she went and consulted Joe, and then came back and made him a cheese omelette with eight eggs. He cleaned his hands and came and watched her while she did it. "Oh my word," he said. "Where did you learn cooking?"

"In Ealing," she said, and it all seemed very far away; the grey skies, the big red buses, and the clamour of the Underground. "I had a sort of little kitchenette with an electric cooker. I always used to cook myself a two course evening meal."

He grinned awkwardly. "Afraid you won't find many electric cookers in the outback."

She touched his hand. "I know that, Joe. But there are lots of things that could be done here to make it a bit easier." As they ate their tea they talked about the kitchen and the house. "It's just the kitchen that needs altering," she said. "The rest of it is lovely."

They ate their tea out on the veranda as the sun went down, and sat looking out over the creek and the bush, smoking and talking quietly. "What are you doing next week?" she asked. "Will you be in town, Joe?"

He nodded. "I'll be in on Thursday, or Friday at the latest. I'm going up to the top end tomorrow for a couple of days, just to see what's going on."

She smiled. "Looking after the poddies?"

He grinned. "That's right. It's a bit difficult this time of year, in the dry, because the tracks don't show so good. I got a boy called Nugget on the station now, and he's a bonza tracker, oh my word. I'm taking him up with me. I've got a kind of feeling that Don Curtis, up on Windermere station, he's been at my poddies."

"What would you do if you found tracks, then, Joe? Tracks leading off your land and on to his?"

He grinned. "Go after 'em and find 'em and drive 'em back." he said. "Hope Don doesn't come along while we're doing it."

He drove her into Willstown at about nine o'clock that night; they halted for a while outside the town to say good night in proper style. She lay against his shoulder with his arm

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around her, listening to the noises of the bush, the croaking of the frogs, the sound of crickets, and the crying of a night bird. "It's a lovely place you live in, Joe," she said. "It just wants a new kitchen, that's all. Don't ever worry about me not liking it."

He kissed her. "It'll be all ready for you when you come."

"April," she said. "Early in April, Joe."

She started up the shoe workshop in the first week of December, three or four days after Aggie Topp arrived. To start with she had five girls. For cleanliness and to mark the fact that they were working in a regular job she put everyone into a green overall coat in the workshop, and gave them a mirror on the wall so that they could see what they looked like.

From the first days she found that the fifteen-year-olds were the best employees. Girls straight from school were used to the discipline of regular hours of work. She ordered an automatic-changing gramophone from Cairns with a supply of records; the music certainly intrigued and amused the whole of Willstown and may have helped the older girls a little, but not much. The big attraction of the workshop was the air-conditioner.

The air-conditioner was the best recruiting agent of the lot. In that torrid summer heat which ranged between a hundred and a hundred and ten degrees at midday, she managed to keep the temperature of the workshop down to about seventy degrees, in which the girls could work without their hands sweating. For the girls it meant that they got respite from the heat of the day, and music to listen to, and the novelty of a clean green overall to wear, and money in their pockets at the end of the week. The workshop was popular from the first and Jean never had any difficulty in getting as many recruits for it as she could handle. For the early months, however, she was content with five.

She spent a hectic fortnight after the workshop opened getting the ice-cream parlour furnished and stocked. She was resolved to have this open by Christmas Day, and she achieved her aim by opening on December 20.

She stood with Joe outside in the blazing sunlit street on that first afternoon, looking at what she had done. The workshop and the ice-cream parlour stood more or less side by side on the main street. The windows of the workshop were closed to keep the cool air in, but they could hear the girls singing as they worked over the shoes. Christmas was near and they were singing carols—"Holy Night," "Good King Wenceslas" and "See Amid the Winter Snow." The shirt was sticking to Jean's back and she shifted her shoulders to get a little air inside. "Well,, there it all is," she said. "Now we've got to see if we can make it pay."

"Come on and I'll buy you a soda," he said. "That'll help." They went in and bought a soda from Rose Sawyer behind the counter. "This part of it'll pay," he said. "I don't know about the shoes, but this should do all right. I was talking to George Connor up at the hotel. He's getting very worried about his bar, with you starting up."

She laughed. "I can't see myself putting the bar out of business, Joe."

"I can see you doing all right, all the same." As they sat at the little chromium glass-topped table, Pete Fletcher came in shyly and sidled up to the bar and ordered an ice cream, and began chatting with Rose Sawyer. Joe said: "Poor old George Connor." They laughed together and then he said: "I bet you don't keep Rose six months."

Jean had seen a good deal of Rose Sawyer in the last month. "I'll take you," she said. "Bet you a quid she's still there in a year from now, Joe." They shook hands on it according to the custom of the place. "If she is," he said, "it'll be a miracle."

Now that the businesses were started she was very tired. She felt slack and listless in the great heat, drained of all energy. She would have liked to go out with Joe to Midhurst that evening and live quietly there for a day or two, sleeping and riding and playing with the little wallaby. A cautionary instinct warned her not to offend against the rural code of morals by an indiscretion of that sort; if she was to make a success of what she had set out to do for women in that place her own behaviour would have to be above reproach. No mothers in the outback, she knew, would care to let their daughters work for her if it were known that she was spending nights alone at Midhurst with Joe Harman; no married man would care to bring his wife and daughters to an ice-cream parlour run by a loose woman.

It was a Wednesday, but Sunday was no longer an off day for Jean since it was likely to be the biggest day of all for the ice-cream and soft drinks. She arranged with Joe that he should call for her at the hotel soon after dawn and take her out to Midhurst for the day. She said goodbye to him and went to her room as soon as work stopped in the workshop, pausing only to see the girls from the workshop sampling the ice-cream parlour. She went and lay down on her bed, exhausted and too tired to eat that night.

Jean had been out to Midhurst several times since that first visit and had fitted herself out for riding with a small pair of ringer's trousers from Bill Duncan's store, and a pair of ringer's elastic-sided riding boots to match. She met Joe in the early morning with a little bundle of riding things under her arm, and got into the utility with him. As usual they drove a little way out of

Continued on page 35

NOW YOU KNOW

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A TOWN LIKE ALICE

Continued from page 32

town and stopped for an exchange of mutual esteem. As he held her he asked: "How are you feeling this morning?"

She smiled. "I'm better now, Joe. It was the reaction, I suppose—getting it finished and open. I went to bed just after leaving you and slept right through. Twelve solid hours. I'm feeling fine."

"Take things very easy today," he said.

She stroked his hair. "Dear Joe. It's going to be much easier from now on."

"This bloody weather'll break soon," he said. "We'll get rain starting within the week, and after that it'll begin to get cool."

They drove on presently. "Joe," she said. "I had an awful row this week with the bank manager—Mr. Watkins. Did you hear about it?"

He grinned. "I did hear something," he admitted. "What really happened?"

"It was the flies," she said. "It was so hot on Friday, and I was so tired. I went into that miserable little bank to cash the wages cheque and you know how full of flies it always is. I had to wait a few minutes and the flies started crawling all over me, in my hair and in my mouth and in my eyes. I was sweating, I suppose. I lost my temper, Joe. I oughtn't to have done that."

"It's a crook place, that bank is," he observed. "There's no reason why it should have all those flies. What did you say?"

"Everything," she said, simply. "I told him I was closing my account because I couldn't stand his filthy flies. I said I was going to bank in Cairns and get the cash in by Dakota every week. I said I was going to write to his head office in Sydney and tell them why I'd done it, and I said I was going to write to the Bank of New South Wales and offer my account to them if they'd start up a branch here with no flies. I said I used a D.D.T. spray and I didn't get flies in my workshop and I wasn't going to have them in my bank. I said he ought to be setting an example to Willstown instead of. . . ." She stopped.

"Instead of what?" he asked.

She said weakly. "I forget what I did say."

He stared straight ahead at the track. "I did hear in the bar you told him he ought to set an example instead of sitting on his bottom and scratching."

"Oh, Joe, I couldn't have said that!"

He grinned. "That's what they're saying that you told him, in Willstown."

"Oh. . . ." They drove on in silence for a time. "I'll go in on Friday and apologize," she said. "It's no good making quarrels in a place like this."

"I don't see why you should apologize," he objected. "It's up to him to apologize to you. After all, you're the customer." He paused. "I'd go in there on Friday and see how he's getting on," he advised. "I know he got ten gallons of D.D.T. spray on Saturday because Al Burns told me."

WHEN they got to Midhurst he made her go at once and sit in a long chair at the corner of the veranda with a glass of lemon squash made with cold water from the refrigerator. He would not let her move for breakfast, but brought her a cup of tea and a boiled egg and some bread and butter on a tray. She sat there, relaxed, with the fatigue soaking out of her, content to have him gently fussing over her. When the day grew hot he suggested that she took the spare bedroom and lay down upon the bed leaving the double doors open at each end of the room to get the draught through; he promised, grinning, not to look if he passed along the veranda. She took him at his word and took off most of her clothes in the spare room and lay down on the bed and slept through the midday heat.

When she woke up it was nearly four o'clock and she was cool and rested and at ease. She went to the shower and stood for a long time under the warm stream of water. She came to him presently on the veranda, fresh and rested and full of fondness for him in his generosity, and found him squatting on the floor mending a bridle with palm, needle and waxed thread. She stooped and kissed him and said: "Thanks for everything, Joe. I had a lovely sleep." And then she said: "Can we go riding after tea?"

"Still a bit hot," he said. "Think that's a good thing?"

"I'd like to," she said. "I want to be able to sit on a horse properly."

He said: "You did all right last time." She had been promoted from the fourteen-year-old Auntie to the more energetic Sally and she was gradually learning how to trot. She found that trotting in that climate made her sweat more than the horse and made it difficult for her to sit down next day, but the exercise, she knew, was good for her. Starting at her age, she would never be a very good rider, but she was determined to achieve the ability to do it as a means of locomotion in that country.

They rode for an hour and a half that evening, coming back to Midhurst in the early dusk. He would not let her stay out longer than that, though she wanted to. "I'm not a bit tired now," she said. "I believe I'm getting the hang of this, Joe."

He drove her into Willstown in the utility, and as they kissed good night he said he would be in during the following week. She went to bed that night rested and content, refreshed by her quiet day.

She went to the bank on Friday and cashed the wages cheque as usual; she found that the walls were in the process of being distempered and there was not a fly in the place. Mr. Watkins was distant in his manner and ignored her; Len James, the young bank clerk, gave her her money with a broad grin and a wink. She saw Len again on Saturday afternoon, when he brought in Doris Nash for an ice-cream soda. He grinned at her and said: "You wouldn't know the bank, Miss Paget."

"I was in there yesterday," she said. "You're having it all distempered."

"That's right," he said. "You started something."

"Is he very sore?" she asked.

"Not really," the boy said. "He's been wanting to decorate for a long time, but he's been scared of what the head office would say. There's not a lot of turnover in a place like this, you know. Well, now he's doing it."

"I'm sorry I was rude," she said.

"I don't know where you're going—but I'm going down"

"If you get a chance, tell him I said that."

"I will," he promised her. "I'm glad you were. Haven't had such a laugh for years. I don't like flies, either."

THAT Sunday, Jean worked steadily in the ice-cream parlour with Rose Sawyer from nine in the morning till ten o'clock at night. They sold a hundred and eighty-two ice creams at a shilling each and three hundred and forty-one soft drinks at sixpence. Dead tired, Jean counted the money in the till at the end of the day. "Seventeen pounds thirteen shillings," she said. She stared at Rose in wonder. "That doesn't seem so bad for a town with a hundred and forty-six people, all told. How much is that a head?"

"About two and six, isn't it?"

"Do you think it's going on like this?"

"I don't see why not. Lots of people didn't come in today. Most of the customers came in two or three times. Judy must have had about ten bob's worth."

"She can't keep that up," Jean said. "She'll be sick, and we'll get a recession. Come on and let's go to bed."

She opened the ice-cream parlour after lunch on Christmas Day and took twenty pounds in the afternoon and evening. She had the gramophone from the workshop in the parlour that evening playing dance music so that the little wooden shack that was her ice-cream parlour streamed out music and light into the dark wastes of the main street, and seemed to the inhabitants just like a bit of Manly Beach dropped down in Willstown. Old and withered women that Jean had never seen before came in that night with equally old men to have an ice-cream soda, drawn by the lights and by the music. Although the parlour was still full of people she closed punctually at ten o'clock, thinking it better as a start to stick to the bar closing time and not introduce the complication of late hours and night life into a rural community.

The workshop went fairly steadily under Aggie Topp and they dispatched two packing-cases of shoes just after Christmas to be sent by rail to Brisbane and by ship to England. She had already sent a few early samples of their work to Pack and Levy by air mail.

On Boxing Day the rain came. They had had one or two short showers before, but that day the clouds massed high in great peaks of cumulo nimbus that spread and covered the whole sky so that it grew dark. Then down it came, a steady, vertical torrent of rain that went on and on, unending. At first the conditions became worse, with no less heat and very high humidity; in the workshops the girls sweated freely even at seventy degrees, and Aggie Topp had to postpone the finishing operations and concentrate on the earlier, less delicate stages of the manufacture of shoes.

JEAN went with Joe to Midhurst for a day soon after the New Year. He called for her just after dawn. It was a grey dawn of hot, streaming rain; she scuttled quickly from the door of her room into the cab of the utility. By that time she was getting used to being wet through to the skin, and drying, and getting wet again; the water as it fell was nearly blood temperature and the chance of a chill was slight. She said as she got into the car: "What are the creeks like, Joe?"

"Coming up," he said. "Nothing to worry over yet." A time would come when for a few weeks he would be unable to reach Willstown from Midhurst in the utility, and would have to ride in if they were to meet at all. He had been stocking up with foodstuffs for the homestead in the last week or two.

There were two creeks between Willstown and Midhurst, wide bottoms of sand and boulders that she knew as hot, arid places in the dry. Now they were wide streams of yellow, muddy water, rather terrifying to her. At the first one she said: "Can we get through that, Joe?"

"That's all right," he said. "It's only a foot deep. You see that tree there with the overhanging branch? When that branch gets covered, at the fork, it's a bit deep then."

They drove the utility ploughing through the water and emerged the other side; they forded the second creek in the same way, leaping from boulder to boulder, and went on to Midhurst. They got there as usual in time for breakfast. The rain was still streaming down in a steady torrent.

To be continued next week

WRITE TO JOHN BULL ABOUT IT

READERS with personal problems can obtain the help of John Bull's team of experts. Inquiries (other than medical) should be addressed to the John Bull Free Advice Service, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Enclose a stamped, addressed envelope for reply.

THE DEEP END OF THE POOL

Continued from page 7

thinking proudly. And then he suddenly felt bitter. Fat lot of credit I get at home, he thought. Forty years ago I was encouraged to come out here; told it was good for the country—my country and this country. And now, when I've done all this, what am I? Just a problem. A bit of grit in the wheels of progress. I shouldn't be here, they say. I bought the land too cheaply from the Government, and it wasn't theirs to sell anyway. If it weren't for me they could hand it all back. . . .

THE household consisted of Judy, the colonel's wife, who was three years younger than he was; his son, Charles, and his wife, Patricia, and their two children, Flora and Ronald.

The children were already in bed when the rest of them sat down to dinner as usual at seven thirty. Light was provided by oil lamps and there was a fire burning in the grate, for it was cold at night at that altitude.

When he had finished his grapefruit the colonel put his spoon down and leaned forward and addressed his wife.

"My dear, have you ever heard of a woman called Miss Vernon Straight?"

The name did not seem to convey anything to Judy, who knew all the Devonshire families and no one else; but Charles sat up stiffly.

"Do you mean that damned schoolteacher who is always croaking about African welfare?"

The colonel smiled gently. "I wouldn't describe a rather distinguished educationalist as a damned schoolteacher myself, Charles. Nevertheless, I think we are talking of the same lady."

Charles snorted. "Aren't there any ignorant, downtrodden people in Britain? Why's she always nattering about us? Keeping the natives down! If she had ever been in Africa she would know that it takes a charge of dynamite to get them up."

"You do the lady an injustice," his father went on quietly. "She has done quite a lot for both education and welfare in Britain. The difficulty is, I suppose, that when one has discovered something that works admirably in one kind of milieu, it's quite natural to suppose that it will work equally well in another. In any case Miss Straight intends to publish another book and wants to study conditions on the spot. She's coming out to East Africa on a visit next month."

"They're always coming out now," Charles groaned, "and writing books about it. It's all this damned flying that's done it. We never even smelt them in the days of the walking safari."

"I've had a letter from George Hastings in Nairobi suggesting that she should come and stay with us for a week," said the colonel. "He thinks it might give her a new angle on the settler problem."

"I couldn't be civil to her, Father. These people never learn anything." Charles was as hot as ever. "They know already, and they only see the things that they want to see. Nothing else. . . . And besides," he went on, "we may have trouble at any time. Those young bucks up in the reserve. If she comes nattering here about the rights of man it might set them off."

"I don't think she would be as foolish as that," the colonel answered calmly. "On the other hand, if we are in for a raid, I personally haven't the slightest objection to it happening while Miss Vernon Straight is here." He paused, catching Charles's eye. "That does not mean, Charles, that I or anyone else will stage anything for her benefit. Fair is fair."

Charles grinned. "All right, Father. I'll behave myself."

"As for myself," the colonel said, "I must say I should like to meet Miss Straight. I am sure she is perfectly sincere. She feels that we have no right here and moreover are tackling our problems in the wrong way. What puzzles me sometimes is to know what right anybody has to be anywhere. . . ."

As it happened, the day Miss Straight arrived, Charles had to go in to the depot sixty miles away to see about some new farming machinery which had arrived minus an important part. It was the colonel who met Miss Straight at the township where she had arrived by bus.

He rather liked her appearance; she was in the late thirties, quite easy to look at, neatly dressed, and she did not wear spectacles. She also seemed genuinely grateful at being given an opportunity to see the country from the inside and asked a number of sensible questions as he drove her back to the farm. He noticed that

"It's easy to spot the single fellows. The married ones automatically lift their feet"

her eye brightened whenever they passed a school or a first-aid post.

Arriving at the farm, she admired the lawn, which pleased him again; and soon she was meeting Judy and Patricia and the children. So far everything was going very well. It really was a blessing that Charles was away.

It was too late that evening for her to see much, but the next day he took her all round the place and showed her everything that he could. He was careful to explain that it had all been carved out of virgin forest; he wanted her to realize the amount of work that had been put into it; he had not come there to educate the natives, but to make things grow. Miss Straight on the whole seemed suitably impressed, but it was quite clear that she was shocked at the appearance of his rust-coloured tribesmen.

IT had been a long day, but the colonel was a tough old man and in the evening he took her up the hill where there was a beautiful view of the whole country around; of the mountains and the forest and the few scattered distant farms on the plateau.

They sat there in silence on two tree stumps for some time, enjoying the stillness of the air, and the colonel was wondering what thoughts were passing in her mind when she suddenly spoke: "What do you pay these natives who work for you here?"

He told her what the pay was; and if she thought it was a starvation wage, she refrained from saying so. But she did go on: "Why are they so much more backward than all the other tribes I have seen?"

"I don't think they're backward," the colonel replied. "They're the best cattlemen for miles around. I don't call that being backward."

"But their huts! That stuff they smear on their bodies! Hasn't any attempt been made to improve them?"

The colonel smiled to himself. "Why, yes. I've taught them a great deal about stock-breeding."

"Can any of them read or write?"

"Good heavens, no. Why should they?"

Miss Straight remained silent, and after a pause the colonel went on: "I am afraid I am a hopeless reactionary, Miss Straight. I believe in teaching people to do their own jobs; not everybody else's. But I think I can promise you one thing. When trouble does start, it won't come from these tribesmen."

Miss Straight looked at him. "You say—when trouble starts? You expect it? They have a grievance?"

"We all have grievances, Miss Straight. Life is a grievance. To you with your kind heart a grievance is something that must be put right. To them it's a different thing altogether. A means to an end. They see my crops and my herds here and they want to grab them. People like reaping what someone else has sown. It's human nature."

"I can't accept that, Colonel Spenser."

"Well, let's differ about human nature then. This isn't Westminster here—or Bloomsbury. That's the shallow end of the pool. We're in the deep end here and we're more interested in swimming than in conciliatory gestures. We're crude, unprincipled people. We are so crude and so unprincipled that our first interest is in our own survival. Shall we go back to the house?"

AFTER this outburst both the colonel and Miss Straight were rather quiet at dinner. Judy and Patricia made most of the conversation, and Miss Straight was human enough to appreciate the saddle of lamb, even if it was the product of sweated labour.

After dinner a note was handed to the colonel by the houseboy. He glanced at it quite casually and then went to one of the windows, pulled the curtains aside and stood looking out. After a moment or two he called very softly: "Judy! Come here!"

She came up beside him and he pointed out into the semi-darkness.

"There's a fire over there! See? It's growing every minute."

Judy waited a few seconds. "Do you think it's a forest fire, Michael?"

"There isn't any forest there. It's open country . . . except for the Suttons' farm."

"Then you think. . . ?"

"I'm afraid it is. That note was from Charles, written this morning. He says there are all sorts of rumours flying about. He's coming back as soon as he can. Hopes to be here by midnight. I think, perhaps, that I had better warn our visitor," he went on. "Miss Straight, would you come here for a moment?"

She came up beside him and stood looking out at the bright yellow light in the distance.

"I'm afraid that's trouble," he told her quietly. "A farm burning. We've been expecting something for a month past and I've had special guards out every night. The usual game is to set fire to some outbuilding and then to drive some of the cattle off while we're busy with the fire. I don't think they'll attack this house if they do come; but if they did set fire to it you no doubt realize that it would burn like tinder."

"Then we'll all have to stay up?"

"No, just be prepared; that's all. Go to your room, lie down, but don't take your clothes off. You can't stop it happening; but if it does happen you've got to get out quickly. Through this door, see? And over to that clump of

Continued on page 38

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Nice Thought
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False
Love's Gondola
Cool, Calm And
The Policeman
Scoutmaster Grandpa
In A Terrible State
Aiming High
Bit Of A Fiddle
Sickening
Spared Nothing
Our Mrs. Mop
Didn't Get A Look-in

Incomplete "Examples" —see Instructions

Meant To.....
Anyone Who's.....
In The.....Class
.....Of His Own
"You Haven't.....!"
What The Visitors.....

NOTE.—You may enclose *Bullets* and Xword entries in same envelope covered by single P.O. for combined entry-fee. Mark envelope "COMBINED," top left-hand corner.

POST ENTRY

"Bullets" 1,740 (or Xword 692), "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.)

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit—the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee, enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests in *Bulletin* and *Gazette* dated August 5 and in JOHN BULL dated August 12, also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

"Bullets" Winners 1,735

FIRST PRIZE, £500 plus Television Installation: C. Livingston, 295 Tweedsmuir Road, Cardonald, Glasgow: SIDE BY SIDE—BY *His* SIDE—PEACE!

SECOND PRIZE, £50: J. Vick, c/o 9 Council Houses, Ponteland, Newcastle-on-Tyne: SCIENCE'S MIRACLES—"FEEDING" MULTITUDES—OF *Fears*.

THIRD PRIZE, £25: A. J. West, 54 Prospect Place, Pembroke Dock: TO REBUILD EUROPE—TRY *My* COAL, SCHUMAN!

£10: A. W. Davis, 47 Draper Road, Christchurch, Hants: TO REBUILD EUROPE—AS MOSCOW "SUBURB"—*Relax*! £10: Mrs. A. Schofield, 28 Eastbourne Road, Blackpool: THOSE WHO FEAR—WAR MOST, SAW MOST. £5: R. A. Constance, 3 Francis Street, Cheltenham: FROM THE RUINS—WIFEY BACKED—INTO POLICE-CAR! £5: H. Eva, 6 Headland Road, Newquay: THOSE WHO BEAT—ABOUT BUSH, "WOOD" BEATS. £5: C. Laird, 30 Warwick Way, Whipton, Exeter: IN A SHADY NOOK—TROUT, WATCHING *Dad* "FRIZZLING"! £5: D. J. Lampard, 39 Wesley Road, Leyton, E.10: THE WAITER BOWED AND—OVERBALANCING, FORGOT FRENCH ACCENT! £5: E. Munford, 87 Woodhall Street, Stonefetty, Hull: WAR OF WORDS—THEN SURPRISED, CHILDREN "DESERTERS."

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Across Clues XWORD 692

3. Experienced traveller can usually be relied on for some good ones
5. It's natural that Scotland Yard should make use of these
6. Bracelets are very often worn by
7. As time goes on, this of shoe may be decidedly uncomfortable
10. A supremely good one is usually advertised
12. It's a step up to get into
14. When a commodity becomes this there's money to be made out of it
15. To try to knock the stuffing out of one is waste of time

Down Clues

1. Queer fish is occasionally seen by
2. Many a one could be cleared for cultivation
4. Inexperienced actor is sometimes this
8. You may find a little this in average nursery
9. Few men can look at a dazzling one without the flicker of an eyelid
11. A boxer may coolly do this before he attempts knock-out
13. Good housewife keeps her eyes open for and attends to, as soon as she can

£100 and HOLIDAY WON—XWORD 687

WINNING WORDS. ACROSS: 1, Cost. 3, Rows. 6, Forced. 9, Pick or Sick. 12, Firm. 13, Freed. 14, Bull. DOWN: 2, Tracks. 3, Red or Rep. 4, Steak. 5, Belt. 7, Fire. 8, Sides. 10, Pelf. 11, Jail.

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THE DEEP END OF THE POOL

Continued from page 36

trees. That's the assembly point. There's a summer-house there." He then turned to his wife and daughter-in-law. "You've got all our drill taped, I take it?"

"Yes," they both said.

"Very well, then, I'll take a walk round and see that the guards are awake. There's no need to rouse the children as yet."

IT was when Miss Straight lay down and tried to rest that she began to feel jumpy. She could not get those villainous-looking herdsmen out of her mind. So she got up to see for the second time that the windows were locked, and for the third time to see that the door was locked. It gave her a momentary feeling of comfort. But as soon as she lay down again there were the rust-coloured herdsmen around her with their half-naked bodies and leery eyes.

And finally she loaded the little revolver which was in her bag and put it in the pocket of her skirt. She had scolded herself severely for bringing such a thing, but she was glad that she had it now.

All this time it was completely still and silent outside and completely still and silent inside the house. She had given up lying on the bed after half an hour. She could not bear that and she sat crouched by the window, peering out. She did not want to be taken by surprise. And, as the silence continued, something very akin to panic grew in her heart.

Then out of the silence there came a low, soft whistle. It was answered by another whistle, like a bird calling. And then the silence returned deeper than ever. Miss Straight crouched by the window, petrified. Suddenly there was a light eighty yards away down the hill. In an instant something was in flames, crackling and throwing out sparks. There were figures running, figures crouching; a sudden bellow from a cow and a shout from a man.

The barn was well ablaze by now, and in the light of it there were more figures racing from right to left. For a moment she thought they had all gone, but then two of them doubled back, one after the other, nearer and nearer, until they disappeared behind the wooden balustrade of the veranda right in front of the window. Miss Straight was panting now and the revolver was in her hand. They were there waiting, the two of them, only six feet away, hiding behind the wooden balustrade.

She kept her eyes fixed on the balustrade, and some long moments later she saw fingers on it, then a hand, then a villainous face with a grin on it. He was climbing over, he was coming for her. Miss Straight could stand it no longer. She fired and the man fell back with a groan.

She stood there, breathing quickly. There's still the other one, she thought. He's there. He hasn't gone away. And she stood with the gun ready.

At that moment there was a rattling at the door handle. Miss Straight wasn't going to open it, but then Judy called outside and she did open it. "It's all right, Miss Straight," Judy began. "They're all running now and they'll run for days. And it's only the old barn that caught alight. We were going to pull it down, anyhow."

It was something in Miss Straight's expression that made her look towards the window. "What's wrong?" she went on sharply. "How did that window get broken?"

"I did it. I fired a shot."

"My dear, you shouldn't have done that."

"But there was a man climbing over

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Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated July 29.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature indicates agreement to Rules.

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to attack me. He looked so awful."

"You fired—you hit him?"

"Yes, he fell back over the veranda."

Judy paused just a second. "I think you need some brandy Miss Straight. But please give me the gun first."

Judy put the gun in the pocket of her skirt and Miss Straight followed her along to the sitting-room. Judy first called the houseboy and gave some quick orders in the native language; then she poured out a stiff brandy and told Miss Straight to drink it. Presently, two of the houseboys came through from the kitchens carrying a limp figure. They laid it on a window seat near the lamp. At that moment the colonel came in from outside.

Judy took him aside and there was a short whispered conversation. After that there was a lot of talk between the houseboys and the colonel in the native language; then finally the colonel came over to Miss Straight.

"I'm terribly ashamed of myself," she said. "I didn't know I could panic like that. Is he badly hurt?"

"It seems to be just a flesh wound in the shoulder. But Patricia is a trained nurse, she'll soon find out."

The colonel was going on to say something more to Miss Straight when suddenly there was Charles's solid figure standing in the doorway. "I've got the ringleader," he announced triumphantly. "Trailed him all the way from Sutton's farm. They're burnt out."

At that moment Charles caught sight of his wife bending over the figure on the window seat. "Hallo! What's happened to our Gurumuru?"

"Just a little accident," the colonel answered quickly. "Better take the other fellow right off to the police and charge him, Charles."

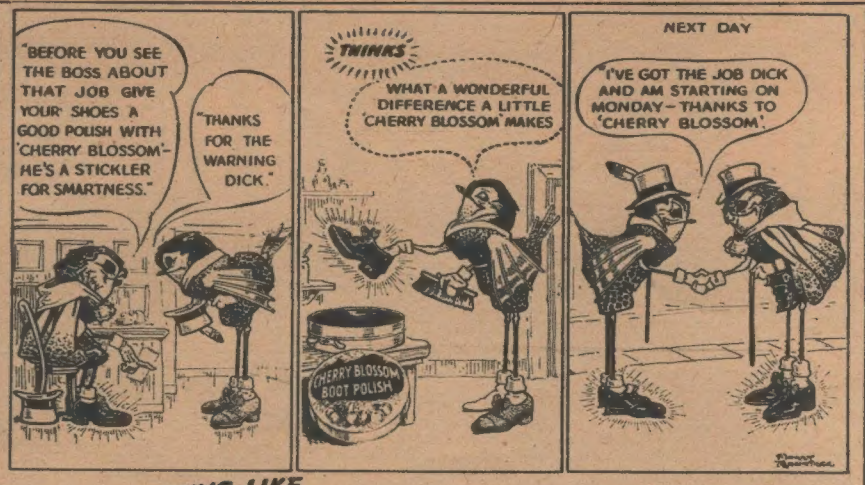
The colonel sighed with relief, but Charles had hardly gone out of the door when Miss Straight turned quickly. "If he's going to the police I think I had better go, too. I have a statement to make. I must take the blame."

It was then that Judy spoke very gently beside her. "I don't think it would be a good thing to make any statement, my dear. You see, it's only a flesh wound and Gurumuru doesn't remember what happened. So I've told them that I fired the shot, trying to hit the man he was struggling with. They all know that I can't hit a haystack. It's been one of their favourite jokes for forty years."

THE colonel looked at his wife admiringly and glanced at Miss Straight. "I want you just to listen to me for a moment." He spoke very softly. Appearances are very deceptive. Especially in this country. You saw two black, evil-looking men running towards your room and you thought they were going to attack you. That wasn't the case at all. One of them was chasing the other. He was chasing him, first because the other man was trying to steal my cattle, and second because he was an old enemy of his who had taken his wife. This man, my best herdsman, Gurumuru, caught the other man up just under your veranda and quietly strangled him there. Very reprehensible of him; but I think we can agree it was in self-defence. I don't know why he climbed over the balustrade after strangling the other man. But it certainly wasn't to attack you. Gurumuru will be perfectly happy and amused—with my wife's explanation."

He was tempted to say more, but he saw that Miss Straight had had enough for one evening and he refrained.

Miss Straight also refrained from publishing the book on educational problems in Africa which everyone was expecting. Possibly it was because she had never thought that her own education would begin again so suddenly and so late in life. THE END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